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ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

MARCH/APRIL 1992 ISSUE #34

COVER: A "deserted" beach is not always paradise, as this nameless adventurer is about to find out in Peter Clarke's cover painting for "Isle of the Abbey."

No Generic Gamers

Every time I start to get a picture of the generic Gamer, you prove me wrong. This is never so clear as when we're debating the best mix of adventures to publish in DUNGEON® Magazine. I think I know just what you want, then at least half of you express the opposite opinion.

Over the last year or so, we've discussed boxed-text vs. no boxes, AD&D® modules vs. other game adventures, and most recently, generic vs. world-specific adventures. As you can read in this issue's letters column, we received good arguments from both sides in the latest debate, with no clear-cut majority of opinion one way or the other. My own feelings on the types of adventures to print closely parallel those of Frank Young (see his letter on page 4; no relation, honest!). To this optimum mix of modules, I'll add one D&D® game adventure per issue (if we receive enough good D&D adventures to print).

Our office boy, Bud, is very disappointed that no one wrote in to thank him for putting together the Holiday Scrapbook of photos on page 76 of the last issue. Bud is a real doll and deserves better treatment. He's looking forward to meeting many of our readers at the 1992 GEN CON® Game Fair.

We also got few letters, either praise or blame, on the poster insert in issue #33. We like to give you an extra goody once in a while, but these things cost money. If you like the idea of a poster insert, please let us know. If you think it's a waste of effort, tell us that, too.

Wolf asked me to remind everyone who submits a module proposal or complete adventure to please remember to include a self-addressed envelope. If you live in the U.S., attach enough postage to return all your materials to you. If you live in other countries, please include an International Reply Coupon for the appropriate amount of postage. Most of you are getting this right, but some of you Canadians think we can use your stamps for postage *from* the U.S. back to you. The "No SASE Ogre" is getting too fat!

Barbara G. Young

Vol. VI, No. 4

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Alan Grimes — **EUPHORIA HORRORS**
(AD&D® adventure, levels 1-2) Can you find a little boy's missing friend? The description he gives you is very strange. *8*

David Howery — **ROGUE**
(AD&D SideTrek adventure, levels 4-5) Many hunters have met the beast. Only one has lived to tell of it—so far. *22*

Randy Maxwell — **ISLE OF THE ABBEY**
(D&D® adventure, levels 1-3) Nothing living guards this island—that's the problem. *26*

Steven Kurtz — **THE *LADY ROSE***
(AD&D adventure, levels 8-11) A town destroyed, young elves kidnapped. Will your continent be the next to fall to the superior firepower of Talangrán? *38*

Craig Barrett — **ON WINGS OF DARKNESS**
(AD&D adventure, levels 4-8) Summer in Calimshan brings a "simple" monster hunt in the cool mountain air. What could be easier? *54*

"Do not meddle in the affairs of wizards, for they are subtle and quick to anger."

Gildor to Frodo
The Fellowship of the Ring
J. R. R. Tolkien

"Do not meddle in the affairs of cats, for they are subtle and will pee on your computer."

Button seen at a science-fiction convention

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LETTERS

All You Want To Know

Over the years, I have noticed many of the same questions and criticisms concerning adventure modules come up again and again. As I have written several adventures for this magazine, I would like to address the following questions from the writer's point of view.

Why are so many modules set in the D&D® game's Known World, the FORGOTTEN REALMS® and WORLD OF GREYHAWK® settings, or other TSR packaged settings? This is simply a matter of logical expedience. When I write a module, I prefer to use one of TSR's worlds because, even if my own game world were 10 times better than TSR's (it isn't, by the way), all the DMs who use the module must change my game world to suit their game worlds. Since those DMs are going to have to change the module anyway, why not make it easy on DMs using the packaged setting? They can use the module as is, without changing anything.

Why do so many modules use a bounty or reward to get PCs involved in the adventure? A bounty or reward is one of the few things that works for all PCs and all campaigns. Modules for publication must take into account all the possible types of adventuring parties who may use the adventure. Noble causes are fine, but not all parties are noble. A quest is fine, but some players don't like being told what they're after. An inheritance is fine, but it can be used only once or twice. You can't have a party member inherit a treasure map every week or play a kind of "dead relative roulette" with the PCs. But adventurers of any level, class, or alignment can collect a bounty or reward. A writer must paint the module in the broadest strokes to allow for variations among campaigns.

Why should a cleric be interested in treasure or "filthy lucre"? Why shouldn't he be interested? To assume that all clerics are nonmaterialistic is confining and unrealistic. Even the most nonmaterialistic cleric will always be interested in taking money out of the hands of an opposing alignment and putting that money to work for his deity: building temples; clothing, housing, and feeding the poor; buying arms and armor for church guards; buying paper and ink for religious tracts, etc. Spreading the faith and protecting existing church property cost big bucks, and adventuring clerics help supply those bucks.

Why can my PCs successfully complete adventures designed for higher-level adventurers? Modules, regardless of level, fall into categories of easy, medium, or hard, based on how difficult it is for an average number of characters with average levels, equipment, and playing ability to successfully complete them. Exceptionally good or well-equipped characters may find an "easy" module absurdly easy. An inexperienced, poorly equipped group of the same level may find the module difficult and challenging. When you write a module for publication, you have no way of knowing how good or bad the DM and players are. Again, you must use a broad framework when writing it and let the DM fit the module to his players and campaign.

Finally, over the years I have heard the following statement several times, but I don't really understand it:

I'd send in some stuff, but I'm afraid they might steal my ideas. Frankly, the very idea is absurd. Editors are not dishonest and cunning, just waiting for some poor sucker to send in an article or idea. If a writer sends in one good piece of work, he might send in more. Interesting modules help sell the magazine. Editors do everything in their power to encourage writers with good ideas, not discourage them.

Randy Maxwell
Odessa, Texas

A Modest Proposal

As for the issue of generic adventures vs. special settings, I have a proposal. There are normally four adventures in each issue of the magazine. One should be set in a specific world such as the DRAGONLANCE® or SPELLJAMMER™ setting. A second adventure could fit into an adaptable category such as the D&D game, WORLD OF GREYHAWK or FORGOTTEN REALMS settings. These adventures can be played as they are, or with a bit of modification can be set in a world of the DM's own design. The remaining two adventures should be generic ones that can fit into any setting.

I enjoyed Wolfgang Baur's editorial in issue #33. Welcome to the group. It sounds like his job is going to be quite an experience. It would be interesting to see what some of his suggestions look like when written up as adventures. And the poster is fantastic!

Frank Young
Crystal River, Florida

Twisted DM

I gather that there are those readers who believe that DUNGEON® Magazine should publish only those generic adventures that could be played by "traditional" D&D or AD&D® gamers. I believe that such a decision would be a terrible mistake. A great deal of DUNGEON's flavor comes from the different kinds of modules you publish: RAVENLOFT™, SPELLJAMMER, Oriental, and DARK SUN™ adventures, to name a few. For DUNGEON Magazine

Continued on page 6

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BY JULIE GUTHRIE

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RAL PARTHA

Continued from page 4

to publish exclusively standard AD&D modules would greatly reduce its scope and potential.

Just because a module has an unfamiliar label doesn't mean that an imaginative DM can't take its idea and incorporate the adventure into his or her campaign. For instance, when I read "Palace in the Sky" in issue #16, I thought, "Very cool, but I'm never going to run a cloud castle in my campaign." I was wrong; I introduced the adventure in an air world of my SPELLJAMMER campaign this week (two years after the module was published).

My point is this: With a little bit of imagination and enough time, just about any module published in DUNGEON Magazine can be twisted about by a DM to suit his or her needs.

Steve Kurtz
Ithaca, New York

A Vote for Versatility

I am a humble yet passionate reader of your and our magazine ("our," because the readers contribute significantly in the form of letters and adventures). I wish to express a few of my reflections resulting from the "Letters" and editorial of issue #33.

I find the term "generic" to be misleading when used to describe the ease of fitting an adventure into an individual's game world. "Generic" implies sameness and conformity: something with a dull, uncreative air. Many of the outstanding and creative adventures in this magazine have been "generic." Such adventures are more aptly called "versatile" or "adaptable." The task of creating these adventures is more difficult when one is not leaning on the crutch of a pre-established TSR world. I regard myself as a moderate on the issue, since I run my own campaign world and one in the FORGOTTEN REALMS fantasy setting, and I get great joy from both.

I appreciate the magazine staff's willingness to receive letters and wish to demonstrate my own willingness. If anyone has ideas on adventure world setting conversion, I would be jubilant to hear from you and will be sure to write back. Please print my full address.

Fritz Donnelly
18320 NE 25th St.
Redmond, Washington 98052

Depth of Detail

I have DMed for over seven years. My players started in Greyhawk, moved to the Forgotten Realms, and are getting ready to make the jump to wildspace.

I have always favored "specific world" adventures, because of their color and depth of detail. When you make something for a specific world, you get to use all the information and oddities of that world in the adventure. It's much more enjoyable to walk into the World Serpent Inn in Arabel (FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) than into some generic tavern. Or if it's liches and vampires you want, go to Westgate. It's alive with background.

So, yes! By all means publish more specific-world modules, especially those set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS and SPELLJAMMER worlds.

You may print my address so that other DMs and players can share their experiences and ideas with me.

Dale Flanagan
P.O. Box 1989
Ely, Nevada 89301

No Restrictions

The types of scenarios I like best are the ones that are set outside of specific worlds. My reason for this is both practical and economic.

If a game is set in a generic world, it can be adapted to any setting. A DM who enjoys the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting can make the necessary changes to adapt a particular module (the same module could be adapted to the SPELLJAMMER campaign or others). Furthermore, I would rather see games that are products solely from the imaginations of the writers, ones that are not bound by the trappings of a set world.

Games that are written for a particular setting require some knowledge of that setting to play them correctly. I would never run a RAVENLOFT scenario, for example, without the official rules. Additionally, these scenarios are sometimes harder to adapt to another setting if the rules of the original world are not known. Learning those rules means buying settings, and frankly, TSR has published so many accessories lately I cannot afford to buy new worlds.

However, I do think it is good to publish modules from these worlds, since it gives the readers a chance to see how the particular game system is run. From your point of view, I can also see that it makes sense to publish modules for TSR game products, as advertisement for those game systems. Ideally, I would prefer to see three to four generic modules and one or two from a particular world in each issue. I also prefer to read several shorter games instead of a few really long ones. Issue #32 looks perfect for my tastes.

John W. Campbell
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Steady On

About generic or game-world specific scenarios: DUNGEON Magazine is all right the way it is. Like a lot of others, I have my own game world, so any world-specific scenarios must be adapted. But the glimpses of other milieux are interesting—and who knows? At some point I might also want to try some of them. As long as the proportion of easily adapted or generic scenarios remains as it is, "no problem."

Although I don't have *Oriental Adventures* or any of the Kara-Tur materials, I don't think I'll have much trouble fitting "Mad Gyogi" (issue #33) into my game world. And a compliment to the writer, Colin Sullivan, for his use of specific names of trees and other plants. This makes the descriptions seem much more realistic.

E. J. ("Jo") Philagios
Denison, Texas

Learning the Hard Way

Since being introduced to your magazine, I have been totally enthralled by the adventures, from the solo adventures to the full-length modules. My favorites to DM were "Intrigue in the Depths" (issue #12), "The Pit," and "Out of the Ashes" (both in issue #17). These, however, were nothing to compare with the fun I had taking the High Mountain Reavers through "Thiondar's Legacy" by Steven Kurtz (issue #30). My battered hat is taken off in respect to Mr. Kurtz for his ingenuity. Not only was "Thiondar" fun as a detective story and information hunt, but the puzzles and the presence of Sharakan the dragon were great!

The Reavers, all mid- to high-level characters, were fairly put in their place when they tried to add Sharakan to their list of "pests exterminated."

They were able to chase Sharakan from his cave but didn't expect an angry wyrm to be searching for them after surviving (barely) their encounter with the Keeper and the Stone of Gul. They were so relaxed, thinking their adventure was completed, that when the first blast of acid hit them, total chaos ensued. Serves them right for attacking anything in sight!

Eric A. Boehmer
Ft. Wright, Kentucky

User-Friendly

I want to compliment you on the excellence of your magazine. In every issue, I can usually find at least one, and sometimes two, adventures that fit nicely into my campaign world.

Here is an example of how useful DUNGEON Magazine is to me. I started DMing for a new club in April 1991. Although we play only once a month for about five hours at a time, the party (which started its characters at first level) has already completed Tower One from "Secrets of the Towers" (issue #10), "A Wrastle With Bertrum" (issue #29), and "Necropolis" (issue #16). In "Necropolis," in a backpack in area 5A, the party found the map that is the centerpiece of "The Moor-Tomb Map" (issue #13). They have also heard about the challenge of the allegedly thiefproof "Treasure Vault of Kasil" (issue #13). In that vault I have placed a map to "The Shrine of Ilsidahur" (issue #10). If the PCs go there, they will have to pass dangerously close to "The Ruins of Nol-Daer" (issue #13).

Naturally, linking these adventures has required some modification on my part, including altering terrain. This clearly must be so in my world, since all these adventures have taken place (or will take place) in the County of Sunndi in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK fantasy setting.

Thank you for a magazine that has brought so much fun to the AD&D game.

Jonathan L. Rariden
Decatur, Georgia

To The Author

I recently played one of your adventures named "Thiondar's Legacy" (issue #30). I love it so much that I had to write and tell you, but I have some questions that I would like to write to the author, Steve Kurtz, about. Could you send me his address?

I have one other question. In the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and *Player's Handbook*, there is no listing (or I couldn't find one) for prices of materials in building a stronghold or castle. if you could help me find them or print them in another issue, it would be great.

Alex Quilter
No address given

We don't give out the addresses of our authors, but we're happy to forward mail to them. Write your letter, then seal it in an envelope with just the author's name on the front. Please put postage on the envelope. Enclose this envelope in a larger envelope addressed to the magazine and mail it to us. We'll add the author's address and mail out your letter right away. After that, it's up to the author to respond to you.

Information on material prices for building a stronghold or castle is given in the AD&D rules supplement DMGR2 Castle Guide, *pages 46-59.*

Traps and Treks

I've been watching you experiment with the way your magazine appears for a while now. I'd still be a big fan of DUNGEON Adventures even if it was photocopied on 8½" × 11" paper and stapled in the corner. What really sets DUNGEON Adventures aside from all other RPG publications is the content, which is excellent.

"SideTreks" is by far the most valuable change you've made yet. It provides a fast "throw in" adventure that can be read in minutes and added just about anywhere in any exciting campaign. Great idea!

Just a suggestion: How about a trap section for dungeon-type adventures? You might even include them as "SideTreks." My players enjoy traps and puzzles far more than any battle I could set up. They keep the whole group's attention and can turn a so-so underground exploration into an exciting experience.

Please consider my idea, and if my letter is printed, please include my full address.

Russ Merritt
1734 Dunn Swamp Road
Pocomoke, Maryland 21851

Continued on page 37

MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON™ Adventures.

EUPHORIA HORRORS

BY ALAN GRIMES

Happiness was never so deadly.

Artwork by Steve Schwartz

Alan, who is appearing in DUNGEON® Adventures for the first time, would like to dedicate this module to all our readers for supporting the hobby. Special notes of spite go to medical school, lost mail, and other things that detract from gaming time. He also writes, "Please don't do drugs. Remember, in real life, there is no saving throw."

"Euphoria Horrors" is an AD&D® adventure for 4-6 player characters of levels 1-2 (about 8 total levels). All character classes are acceptable, though a rogue, ranger, or other scouting class could prove useful. The PCs should be good aligned, cooperative, and willing to help others, as the original impetus for the adventure will provide them with neither monetary nor magical treasure.

The adventure is set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign setting, just north of Highmoon in Deepingdale. Since this adventure takes place in the Dalelands of the Realms, it is well suited for the premier adventure of a new campaign, particularly for beginning players. To integrate this adventure into a beginning or ongoing campaign, the party can begin in Deepingdale. The encounter below occurs as the PCs travel to Shadowdale in search of adventure. Several further campaign ideas are provided in the final section of the module.

This adventure makes passing mention of some of the locales in the Realms, and the central creature (the faerie dragon) is one of the monsters listed in the first FORGOTTEN REALMS appendix to the *Monstrous Compendium*. This appendix, along with the FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set and FORGOTTEN REALMS *Adventures* hardback, will be useful in running this adventure. Outside of the Forgotten Realms, any wooded setting off the beaten path is acceptable. The DM may also use the faerie dragon statistics from *Monster Manual II*.

Adventure Background

The adventure should begin at mid-afternoon in a forested region one or two days' travel from the nearest major city. A map of the Deepingdale area is provided, but the DM can modify or discard this map as fits the campaign.

To start the adventure, the DM should paraphrase the following information to the players.

As the adventurers travel through the forest, they hear a faint, high-pitched voice calling in the distance. Gradually, the voice gets nearer until they can tell that it is a child calling out the word "Drake" over and over in Common. Soon, they meet the boy among the trees.

The boy is approximately seven years old, is dressed in rough but well-tended clothes, and has a tear-streaked face. He begins his call again, but he notices the party and immediately goes wide eyed at the sight of the adventurers. If the party does nothing to scare the boy further, he soon recovers.

Though the boy is not terribly afraid of strangers, he will react if the party makes any sudden or threatening sudden actions. If he becomes frightened, he backs away from the PCs but does not leave, as he would like their help in finding the elusive Drake.

"Have you seen my friend Drake?" he asks the group. The party presumably answers in the negative, and the child bursts into tears again. With a little coaxing, the boy tells his tale amid sobs and outbursts of crying. The story should be filled with plenty of sidetracks and crying bouts but should eventually reveal the following information:

The boy, whose name is Michael, is the son of a woodcutter and his wife (he does not give their names) who live nearby. Drake has been a friend of his for over a year. During that time, they have met in this area at least twice a week to play and have fun with the forest creatures, since the nearest other human settlement is over two miles away.

In Michael's favorite game, Drake takes a purple ball, disappears (Michael will not elaborate on this), and hides the ball somewhere. Michael must then find the ball. The DM should be sure to mention this game, though casually, for it is one of the clues that the party can use to find Drake.

For some reason, Drake has not shown up for two weeks, and the boy is nearly hysterical. He cannot tell his parents about the problem because, as he puts it, "Mommy and Daddy don't want me playing with anybody." Michael goes into some detail as to the devious plans he uses to convince his parents that he just plays around the forest by himself when he is actually out playing with Drake. He then breaks into another bout of sobbing and begging the party to help him find Drake.

For the Dungeon Master

The adventurers will probably want more information on exactly what Drake looks like. The interesting point is that "Drake" is exactly that: a small dragon. Specifically, Drake is a very young faerie dragon who wandered into the area about a year and a half ago. During a flight around the forest about six months after arriving, Drake saw Michael with a piece of apple pie and, unable to resist, flew closer to get a bite. Michael saw the beautiful creature and offered the pie to him. They have been stout friends ever since. Michael brings Drake bits of fruit and cake, and Drake plays with the lonely boy.

Michael describes Drake as being about "this big" (holding his hand about 2' off the ground) and "usually kinda reddish colored." If the party asks a question like "What is he?" Michael describes him as really friendly and a lot of fun but gives no further explanation of what type of creature his friend might be.

Michael: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 5, D 13, C 10, I 14, W 11, Ch 13; SZ S; ML 9. Since he is so young, Michael does not yet have any weapon proficiencies, but he can scratch and bite for 0-1 hp damage. He speaks Common, Elvish, and fairly good faerie dragon.

Michael does not know that Drake is a dragon, let alone a faerie dragon. He thinks of Drake as a big butterfly and as his best friend. The DM should not let this description be revealed to the party too quickly, though. Perhaps Michael is in the middle of a fit of crying when the question is first asked. If the PCs ask where Drake lives, the boy replies, "I dunno. He goes off that way when I have to go home," and points a finger in any direction the DM chooses (Drake leaves randomly). If the questioning goes on for quite some time, the DM may wish to substitute "he flies" for "he goes," realizing that this will be a big clue.

For this adventure to get moving, the party should accept the challenge and begin looking for the boy's friend. If the party has not found out from Michael that Drake is a "big butterfly," one of the adventurers should soon notice that Michael spends as much time looking up into the sky as he does at the ground. If questioned about this, Michael mentions that Drake can fly and looks like a butterfly. If anyone asks if Drake is a faerie dragon or pseudodragon, the child admits that he does not know. The party may make an assumption that Drake is a faerie dragon and try to explain his absence as due to the creature's chaotic nature. Michael rejects this idea and bursts into tears, insisting that he and Drake have been best friends for a year, commenting, "You're lying!"

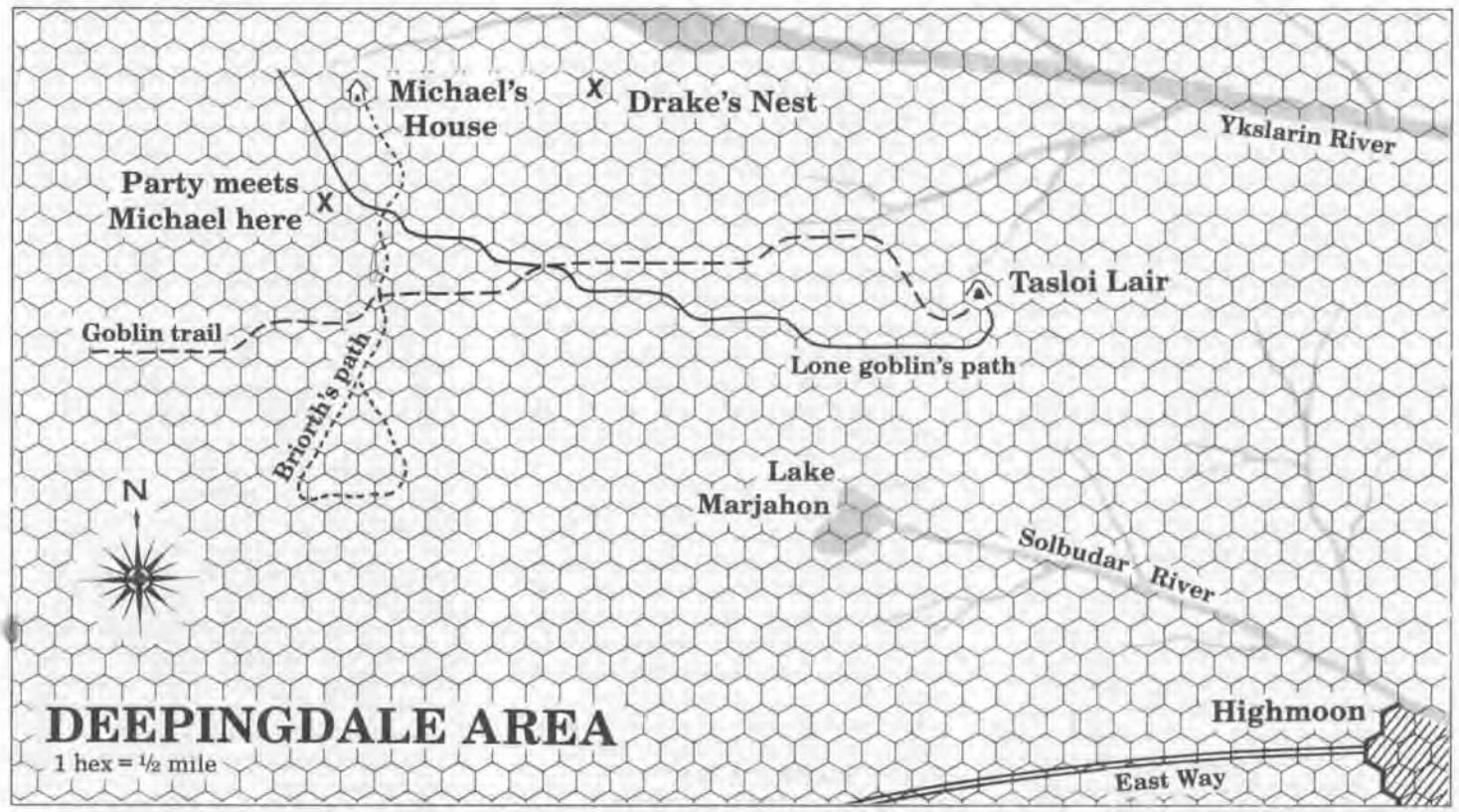
It begins to get dark about two hours after the party meets Michael, and he rushes off toward home for dinner. During these two hours, no clue as to Drake's fate will be found. When Michael leaves, he will not allow the party to accompany him home, because his parents do not approve of strangers. This also explains why he cannot tell his parents about Drake's absence, for they strictly forbade him from having any nonhuman playmates (a not unreasonable restriction in a fantasy setting). Once he gets home, the boy's parents will not allow him to leave the house again nor allow strangers anywhere near their home or child (see "Michael's House" below).

In fact, Drake would like nothing better than to get back to playing with Michael. While gallivanting around the forest 15 days ago, he saw a tasloi patrol clambering through the trees. True to his nature, he turned *invisible* and set out after them to see what mischief he could work up. When the tasloi arrived at the forest cave they called home, he followed them right in, as he had never had a problem with such humanoid encounters in the past.

Unfortunately, this was not the past, and the tasloi somehow detected his presence and threw flour (obtained from plundering a forest hut) on him to mark his location. Though Drake did his best to escape, the tasloi overwhelmed him with sheer numbers.

He now regrets having tried so hard to escape, because one of the weapons he used was his breath weapon, a euphoria gas. He was able to overcome some of the tasloi this way, but the time limit between uses (once every three rounds, as for all dragons) restricted the gas's helpfulness. Eventually, he was captured, his wings were slashed, and he was tied and placed in a cage in the tasloi lair.

The tasloi who were affected by the euphoria gas eventually recovered and



reported the wild sensation they felt while under its influence. The others of the tribe were eager to try this out and forced Drake to use his breath weapon on them (in effect, they voluntarily gave up their saving throws). Since then, the tasloi have expected daily doses of the gas, threatening to withhold food or kill Drake unless he breathes on them.

Some of the tasloi are now addicted to the euphoria gas, and most of the tribe loves the feelings they get when high on it. Their leader changed the tribe's name to the Tribe of the Wishes (those under the gas's effects experience whatever they wish) to reflect their new acquisition. The leader then sent word to neighboring tasloi and humanoid kings, promising them a whiff of the gas if they send tribute to this group (see "Concluding the Adventure" for expansions on this theme).

Wandering monsters should not be used during this adventure, for they will only weaken the low-level party and slow game play. In addition, the area is kept relatively clean by regular patrols of the Deepingdale militia, which also explains why Michael's parents allow him to play without supervision. If the DM decides that wandering monsters are appropriate, however, the following procedure is suggested: Roll 1d10 once every six hours. A roll of 1 indicates an encounter occurs. Equal chances should be assigned to encounters with 1-4 huge centipedes, a giant toad, 1-10 brush rats, 1-2 stirges, 1-3 orcs, and 1-6 large bats, with all statistics as per the *Monstrous Compendium*.

Michael's House

The house in which Michael and his parents live is a simple wooden affair with a beam and clay-tile roof: little more than a living room, kitchen, pantry, and two bedrooms. Michael's father, Briorth, built the house himself several years ago, and the whole family has put a lot of work into it. They are very protective of their home and its surroundings.

If the party attempts to approach the house, the father warns them off with a heavy axe in hand, asking "Who are you, and what are you doing around my house?" Michael will not support the PCs' claims that he knows them, as he is afraid of being punished by his parents if they find out he talked to strangers, or that he played with a forest creature. Briorth will take offense if the PCs imply that his son is lying, and he will refuse to discuss the matter with them further unless they apologize.

If the party escorts Michael back to his home, the boy runs off before they can reach the house. Briorth spies him as he enters the clearing and orders him into the house. Michael goes through the door with downcast eyes but turns and waves at the party before he enters the house.

If the PCs speak to Briorth and mention they are on their way to Shadowdale, Michael's father warms a bit toward them and offers directions: "Keep going to the north. You'll find the Ykslarin River only a couple miles away. Go downstream 'til you reach the River Ashaba and follow that up its course to the north until you get to the Tower of Ashaba. You'll then be in Shadowdale. Now you'd best be moving along before night falls."

Briorth will not hesitate to defend his home or his child if the party continues their attempts to enter the house. He will neither offer nor allow the PCs to rest for the night in his clearing. If asked why he is so belligerent, he re-

plies "You're adventurers by your gear, and adventurers bring naught but trouble! Begone before you ruin our home." The parents are not at all sympathetic to any pleas or bargains that the party makes, and will not allow them to see Michael under any circumstances. Attacking the parents would be a highly evil act, and the party should soon realize that they will not be able to converse with Michael again. The party is thus left to their own devices to find the missing dragon.

Michael's father is a woodcutter, following the trade his family has practiced for generations. He has an impressive build from years of hard work in the forest, and he wears thick hide clothes that make him look rugged as well as protecting him from wood chips, flying wedges, and glancing axe blows.

Each day, he leaves shortly after dawn to chop down trees and stack them neatly in selected spots. A merchant company from Highmoon then picks them up by means of a *flying carpet* and leaves the payments in a special account in Highmoon for Briorth to pick up when needed. He is an isolationist, but he has a firm sense of obedience to the law. He speaks Common and Dwarven. The DM should play him as a stern, no-nonsense man. He has no reason to help the party, but he is not evil. He merely wants to be left alone to keep his family safe and secure.

Briorth: AL LN; AC 8; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 12, C 14, I 11, W 13, Ch 12; ML 11; hide clothing, battle axe, dagger.

Briorth's wife, Ymelda, is a frail though stately woman. She spends much of her day in the house, doing various tasks to keep the area clean. To help the family buy a few luxuries, she makes beautiful wooden dolls from the trees and vines around their forest home. These are sold once every six rides (a ride in the Realms is 10 days) in Highmoon, when Briorth makes a trip there to pick up supplies. She currently has 15 of these dolls completed and sitting out on a table. Each doll sells for 10-20 gp (though her husband will certainly not let the party close enough to buy any).

Ymelda: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 7, D 13, C 6, I 10, W 9, Ch 13; ML 10; kitchen knife, rolling pin (treat as a club).

Ymelda spends part of each day tending the family's substantial garden, which provides for most of their needs besides the meat that Briorth brings home from occasional hunting trips. She speaks Common and Elvish. If she is encountered, the DM should play her as a tempering force on her husband, a little more kind but somewhat naive, as Briorth allows her little outside contact. She might be able to prevent Briorth from attacking the PCs if they have been particularly offensive in their attempts to get into the house.

The Search Is On

Once the party is separated from Michael, several clues can be found regarding the events that transpired two weeks ago. A list of the items that can be found if the PCs search the forest follows. The DM should determine which items the party finds, depending on the time of day. Keep in mind that Michael left the group at approximately 6:00 P.M. Thus, it is already growing dark quickly. If the party followed Michael toward his home, it will be dark by the time they can do any serious searching. Even if they start the search immediately, only half an hour of dusky light remains before complete darkness falls.

The party has two choices at this point: They can continue the search at night, or they can rest until morning. If the party searches during daylight hours, roll 1d100 for each PC searching, with 1-10 indicating something is found. If the party decides to continue searching at night (using torches or some other light source), the chance should be halved. Elves and halflings have an addition of 5% by day and night.

Thus, for a party of four searching for one hour, the chance of finding something would be determined by rolling 4d100, with a 10 or lower on any of them succeeding. If a PC has tracking proficiency, use that skill at a −10 penalty instead of the 10% chance. If the party increases or decreases the search time, the DM should increase or decrease the chance proportionally.

When something is found, roll 1d6 and consult the following list of items that can tip off or mislead the party as to Drake's fate, or simply use the items in the order provided:

1-3 The purple ball (mentioned in the Adventure Background). Michael's ball lies amid a pile of brush, dropped by Drake when he flew off after the tasloi. Finding the ball should give the party an idea that Drake did not just run off on his own.

4 Human bootprints. This is a false trail; it is the path that Michael's father took one day when heading towards a new cutting area. He found the area unsuitable for his needs, and he did not return by the same route. The tracks are at least a month old and are still around only because of Briorth's weight and the lack of heavy precipitation since they were made. The tracks lead to another area of the forest some three miles from the party's search site, and then back to Michael's house.

5-6 Humanoid tracks. The tasloi were not particularly interested in covering their tracks, as they were returning from a plundering expedition and were still fairly new to the area. The tracks are faint (two weeks old). They can lead the party close to the lair. The tracks end 200 yards from the tasloi cave, since this is where the tasloi remembered to start erasing them. They did not, however, think to cover the tracks from subsequent forays out of the cave, so the party should have a fairly easy time finding it.

This is the biggest clue to Drake's location, so the DM should not give it out until he is ready to have the party find the cave. If the party seems ready to give up and move on, though, stumbling across these tracks should send them in the right direction. Note that rangers have a 10% chance per level of recognizing the tracks as that of tasloi (they are rare for this area) and knowing that the creatures are small and usually attack in groups.

If the party uses a *speak with animals* spell and tries to quiz talkative forest creatures, the DM must decide whether or not to give out any useful information. If the party is having a difficult time discovering what happened to Drake, the DM can allow the animal to give the PCs a hint. Suggestions as to what to reveal include having the creature remember seeing a "big butterfly" head off to the east, recall a group of tasloi in the area, or remember a cave (the tasloi lair) in the forest. If the PCs terrify or intimidate the furry critters, the DM has every right to withhold information.

If the PCs don't find the tasloi tracks and fail at interrogating squirrels, the

DM may decide that a mercy encounter with a lone tasloi is the only way to speed things along. Since the party must eventually find the tasloi lair in order to find Drake, this is a critical encounter.

After perhaps a day of fruitless searching by the party, a solitary tasloi appears. He is a messenger from a neighboring tribe, sent to get more information about the "magic gas" that the Tribe of the Wishes allegedly has acquired.

Tasloi: INT low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9, climb 15; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SZ S; ML 10; XP 35; MC2; short sword, javelin, small shield, neck pouch with 12 sp and 5 gp (for bribing). He can speak halting Common.

If the PCs follow the tasloi, he leads the party right to the cave. If questioned, he will not hesitate to give away the location to save his hide. He travels on the ground so as to not miss certain markers he was told to use as guideposts.

The Tribe of the Wishes

Though all tasloi are greedy and power hungry, those in this tribe are perhaps worse than their kin. During their life with their larger clan (the Gnarled Knees) in the northern section of the Thunder Peaks, this batch was constantly in dire trouble for murdering, robbing, and otherwise causing trouble. Granted, all tasloi murder, rob, and cause trouble, but usually not within their tribe!

After a long mini-war among the two factions in the Knees, the leader of the rebels, a tasloi named Urglak, united a small group of these troublemakers and tried to overthrow the current tribal chief. Their revolt was easily squashed, and the remainder of the group fled, fearing for their lives. Numbering just over two score, they managed to grab only a few supplies and three of the clan's large spiders (the giant ones proved too unruly) before leaving.

The band traveled northward, out of the mountains where their original tribe held sway. Shortly after leaving the Peaks, Urglak led them into a small village in Deepingdale, in an effort to gather food, money, and slaves. Their efforts were repulsed, and they were driven further northward. The forced travel worked to their advantage, though, because a day after the failed attack at the village, they discovered a cave complex in a forest glen. The cave was occupied by a small family of bears, but the tasloi were able to drive them out, although they lost several of their number and two of the spiders in the fight.

The remaining tasloi expanded the cave, adding a new area for Urglak, a storage area, and two sleeping areas. While digging out the leader's room, they found a strange iron door (to area 8) and heard scratching sounds coming from behind it. They prudently left the door closed, heaping a large pile of assorted junk in front of the door to keep the noise out of the complex. Though Urglak was certainly not happy about the presence of an unknown creature so near his room, his memory of it soon dimmed, since the noises are too faint to remind him. He has now almost forgotten why the pile of junk is in his room, and he does not worry about it.

Two weeks after arriving in the area, Urglak ordered a small group of the tasloi to get food by plundering a village or hunting small game. Only the cloudiness of the day and his control of the tribe forced them out during daylight hours. They found a small hut in the forest (a lone woodsman's summer cottage), sacked it, and divided the food up to take back to the cave. On the way back, they ran into Drake.

Unknown to Drake, they saw him before he turned *invisible* and then were careful at watching the small disturbances made when he rustled through the leaves on the trees. When they arrived at the cave, they captured him as described in "For the Dungeon Master." In the two weeks since then, the tasloi have been beefing up their cave, waiting for tribute to pour into their coffers.

Though tasloi generally live in tropical settings, this tribe (and its parent clan) moved from that climate decades ago and has adapted to this setting. This may well be the PCs' (and perhaps the players') first encounter with these creatures, so the DM should keep the mystique alive, not revealing the tasloi's true nature and abilities. The DM can read the "Tasloi" entry in the *Monstrous Compendium*, but the basic features to relate to the PCs are: small size (2'-3' high); long arms; dark greenish-brown skin (adapted for their new climate); coarse black hair; gold catlike eyes; and high, whispery voices.

Addiction

As with all mind-affecting substances, the euphoria gas of the faerie dragon is addictive to those who are repeatedly exposed to it within a short period of time. The effects are difficult to relate in game terms, as many have to do with personal relationships. For the purposes of this module, however, the following effects should be used:

First and most important, the tasloi in the tribe do not get along with one another nearly as well as they once did (and tasloi are not known for their cooperative skills in any case). If the party manages to sneak up on the tribe, they will find picking off lone tasloi to be an easy task. Even if one should cry out a warning, the others will take no heed, as they neither care to help each other nor believe the warning to be real. While under the influence of the gas, or during the terrible depression that quickly follows an addicted individual's high, the tasloi have called out many strange things, and no one pays much attention to this sort of thing any more.

Two tasloi are not addicted because they are allergic to the gas. These tasloi get violently ill and become incapacitated for 24 hours when exposed to Drake's breath weapon. These two will try to help any of their brethren who are attacked by the PCs. The rest of the tribe will come to the aid of Urglak because he provides them with their fixes. The unaddicted tasloi could seize the leadership of the tribe from Urglak (who is also addicted), but they have not yet built up the courage to do so.

Furthermore, the addicted tasloi are very disoriented at all times. When on a high (approximately 20 minutes each day), they are oblivious to the world (in a state of bliss, unable to attack, −2 to AC). If it becomes necessary to concentrate in this condition, a tasloi may make an intelligence check on 1d20, once each round. As soon as he fails an intelligence check, he loses all interest in matters at hand for the duration of the breath weapon's effect.

When not actually high on the euphoria gas, the tasloi are depressed and melancholic, spending the majority of each day lying on their cots dreaming of the next fix.

Due to these effects, the tasloi troop will take two rounds to prepare for any battle. The tribe can avoid this delay if either of the two alert tasloi notices the

party's attempts to enter (see area 1) and begins rallying the others early. Once combat has actually begun, the addicted tasloi have a −2 on their to-hit rolls and a +3 to initiative at all times due to their stupor and confusion.

To get their fix of Drake's euphoria gas, the tasloi go in three shifts of about five tasloi apiece due to the gas's limited radius of effect. The groups gather at random times during the day, depending upon when Urglak allows it and when the tasloi get desperate for their next fix.

At present, Drake is forced to breathe euphoria gas for the tasloi 12 times each day, the maximum he can support in his present state (this replaces the unlimited uses that the MC mentions for a healthy faerie dragon). The tasloi have not thought of what they will do once tribute from other tribes is received, because there is no gas to spare at present.

If the tasloi messenger mentioned in "The Search Is On" arrives at the cave, Urglak gives the envoy a whiff of the gas in place of one of his own tribesmen. The party should not not arrive at the cave during one of the fix times, as those times represent only a small fraction of the day.

The Tasloi Lair

Eventually, the party should find the lair and decide to investigate. Getting to the lair itself should prove no problem, as there are no wandering monsters to harm the party. Furthermore, though the tasloi did post guards when they first arrived in the area, they are now too forgetful and lackadaisical to worry about it, partly due to their chaotic nature and partly due to the effects of the gas.

After arriving at the cave, however, the PCs will have to use their wits. If the party has tried to bring Michael along, he becomes skittish at being away from home for so long and insists on returning there. The DM should make every attempt to keep him out of the tasloi lair, as his death would bring dire repercussions on the party.

The area around the cave is a heavy oak wood. The cave itself lies in the side of a small hill and faces south. The central cavern (area 1) and area 5 were made long ago by persons unknown, and the rest (except area 8) was carved out by the tasloi. Therefore, the ceiling heights in the various areas are different. The height of each area is given in the text, along with the lighting conditions for that area.

Passages range from 4'-5½' in height. Adventurers taller than the given height suffer a −1 to hit and a −1 movement penalty due to cramped space and forced bending. If any adventurer is more than 1' over the given height, he suffers −3 to hit and movement penalties.

Many pole arms are unwieldy and virtually useless in the complex, as is any weapon of Medium or greater size (see the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, pages 68, 69, and 73). At the DM's option, thrusting pole arms such as spears, forks, and tridents may still be effective. Medium weapons suffer a +2 to initiative rolls, and Large weapons suffer a +5. Missile weapons are restricted to short range because of the lack of any arching space. In general, the party should feel cramped and cornered at all times.

The tasloi dug their part of the complex out of packed earth, so the tribe lives in a tomb ready to collapse at any moment. They have never heard of shorings, so nothing actually holds up the roof of the cave except at the entrance, which was built before the tribe arrived. Gnomes are allowed the usual 7-in-10 chance to notice the state of the ceiling if they examine the quality of the digging for one round. PCs with mining nonweapon proficiency will likewise be able to quickly ascertain the instability of the area.

The complex will not collapse while the party is within it unless the PCs have some means of setting off an explosion. The DM should assign a chance for collapse equal to 5% per hit die of a *fireball, lightning bolt,* etc. *Magic missiles* and Greek fire will not cause a cave-in unless vast quantities are used, though the DM should feel free to mention dirt trickling from the ceiling to put the party on guard. Note that dwarves do not have any racial ability to detect unsafe ceilings.

1. The Entrance (ceiling 15'). The description below assumes that the PCs have followed the tasloi tracks. If they trailed the lone tasloi to the lair, simply drop the first paragraph of the description. In either case, read or paraphrase the following when the party is within 25' of the entrance:

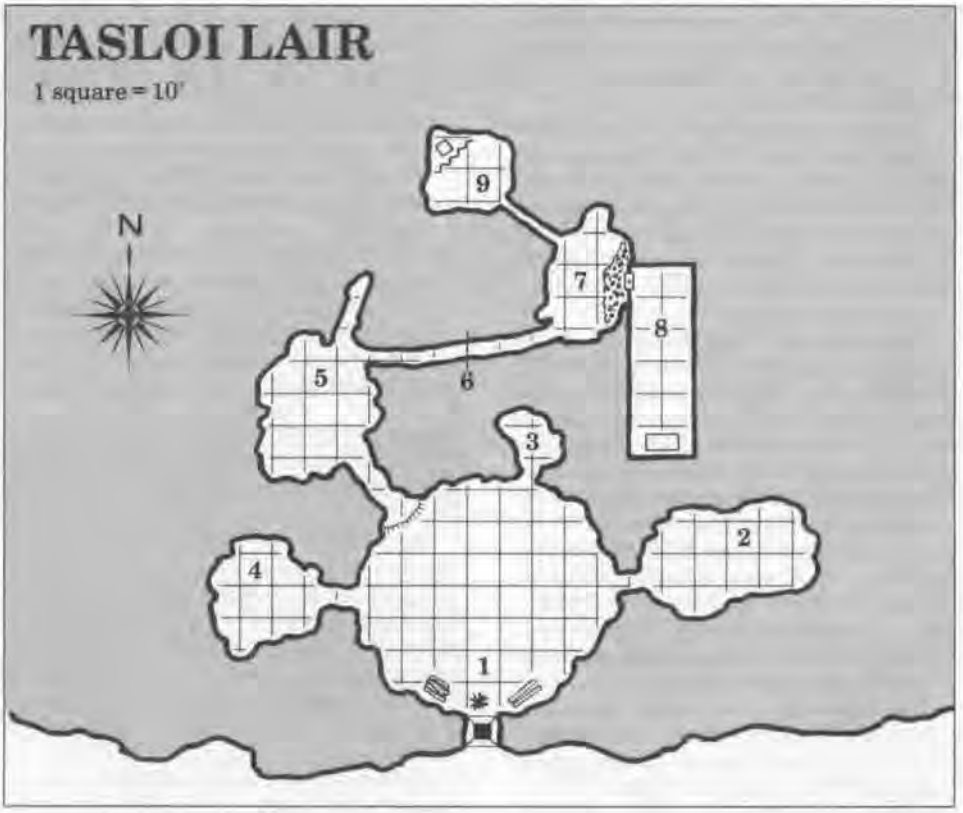
> The trail through the forest has been incredibly easy to follow, almost as if the creatures that created it were deliberately trying to lead you to their home. After meandering through the oaken woods, the trail ends at a cave mouth in a moderately sized hill.
>
> From the cover of nearby oaks, you can see that the entrance into the hill appears to have been constructed by intelligent beings, as shorings protect its sides and top. Below the shorings lies a pit with a blazing fire on the far side. You see no motion beyond the flickering flames, and there are no signs of occupation other than the fire.

When the tasloi acquired Drake, they quickly dug a large pit in the cave entrance to prevent easy entry, cutting planks from the surrounding woods to use in crossing the pit (these planks are stored just to the east of the pit inside the cave). When leaving the cave, the tasloi store the planks in a secret spot in the woods.

This worked for a short time, until a small wild dog jumped over the hole into the cave, injuring Urglak. He ordered that the tribal fire in the main cavern be moved to the entrance to keep creatures from jumping over the pit. The tasloi moved their fire and have had no other problems to date. They keep the fire going here because, in the past few days, the tasloi have not left the cave except for calls of nature, in paranoia of losing their "magic gas" to an attack by a neighboring tribe. Although it is inconvenient, the tasloi see the fire and pit as necessary annoyances to protect "their" dragon. It takes them about 15 minutes to place the planks around the fire (which they do not extinguish).

The party will have to find some means of overcoming this small inconvenience. Getting into the cave will be much simpler if the PCs can douse the fire by throwing a large amount of water or dirt on it, or if they have spells like *affect normal fires* or *create water* (which must produce at least 16 gallons to be effective).

Using any of these methods is likely to alert one of the tasloi, especially one of the two alert ones in area 2. The alert tasloi begin marshalling the entire tribe (from areas 2 and 4) into area 5 for a



mass stand, taking three rounds to do so. The only way for the PCs to avoid notice is to enter silently at night (without dousing the fire) or to navigate the entry silently and quickly without disturbing the fire by day.

If the fire is extinguished, the party can attempt to jump over the 7' wide, 15' deep pit, cut planks from the woods (taking three hours), or use any other strategy that the DM decides is reasonable. If a PC attempts to jump the pit without extinguishing the fire, he cannot avoid falling into the fire upon landing. The fire inflicts 2d4 hp damage per round and set aflame all flammable objects. Sufficient room exists to place planks over the pit without disturbing the fire, but the time required to set them firmly in place will make stealth difficult.

If the PCs wait around for more than 10 rounds at the entrance, they are noticed by a tasloi blundering across the main cavern. The party sees a short form walk into the cave from the right, look at them, then go screaming off to the northwest (toward area 5). Because the fire lies between the PCs and the unknown figure, neither regular nor infravision allow the PCs to see any details.

All descriptions below assume that the cave complex has been alerted. The DM should change the descriptions as necessary if the party succeeds in entering undetected.

Once the party has entered area 1, read the following to the players, modifying it if the tasloi have not been warned:

> With the minor annoyance of the cave entrance behind you, you enter the lair itself. The main room, a circular cavern perhaps 75' in diameter, is a jumbled heap of trash, food, and an occasional blood splotch on the dirt floor.
>
> To the right of the entrance lies a stack of crude wooden planks, and to the left is a pile of wood of all sizes, probably to fuel the fire. Four passages leave the cavern, arranged around the perimeter of the room. The second passage from the left is different from the others; it is raised 5' off the floor, and a stacks of wood and brush blocks its opening. Occasionally, you see the brush rustle. Apparently, the cave is not as deserted as you would like.

The tasloi in the tunnel to area 5 will not attack from that range, as they have no missile weapons. If the party stands around long enough, the PCs hear mutterings and a couple of groans from behind the wall of brush. Exploration near the brush elicits a club bash or sword thrust from the hidden tasloi, although there is little chance of the PCs being struck. Likewise, with the entry 5' off the floor, the party has little chance of hitting the tasloi. See area 5 for details of combat at the ledge.

If the party entered without alerting the tasloi, the ladders to area 5 are still be down, and the tasloi are divided up into areas 2, 4, and 5. The brush is stacked along the hallway to area 5, leaving a clear but cramped walking space in the middle of the corridor.

Other than the firewood and planking, this room contains no items of value. A search lasting at least a turn, though, will reveal claw marks of two sizes on the floor and walls of the cavern. In addition, a "wingprint" (the outline of Drake's wing) lies in the dirt just to the east of the pile of planks. These spots indicate where Drake and the tasloi scuffled. The larger claw marks are from bears (earlier inhabitants of the caves).

2. Barracks (ceiling 5½').

> The first thing you notice about this room is its overbearing sickly sweet odor, a cross between a year-old fungus experiment and a confectionery shop. Almost gagging at the hideous stench, you peer into the space it comes from. The cavern extends approximately 50' away from the narrow opening you are standing in, and it is lit at the far end by four moderately sized brass braziers hanging from the wall. You can only guess what material was placed in the braziers to create such a pungent smell.
>
> The light from the braziers shows that the room contains five small wooden cots, two of which are in much better shape than the others, almost what you'd call tidy. The floor of the area is free of the filth that lined the main cavern, but you see some junk lying under the three messy cots. One of the cots is occupied by a strange humanoid form, snoring slowly.

These are the sleeping quarters of five of the tasloi in the tribe, including the two that are not addicted to the gas. These two sleep nearest to the braziers, and their beds are separated from the others by a large space. Because the addicted tasloi have little on their minds besides their next fix, they neglect to take care of themselves or their property. As such, they often return to their bunks still smelling a bit like the euphoria gas (and other bodily substances). The two unaddicted tasloi, as mentioned above, are allergic to the gas, so they keep away from those who use it. The disgusting odor comes from a form of incense that the unaddicted tasloi burn in the braziers to cover the smell of the gas.

The neat beds are those of the unaddicted tasloi, and a search beneath them will reveal more than the typical tasloi accoutrements, as these two have seized upon the stupor of the others to nab a few goodies: a pouch containing 15 gp, a small piece of jade worth 25 gp, two daggers, three clubs, a footman's mace, a small shield, and a box of 15 small pieces of incense that smell as horrid as the room. The other cots have miscellaneous junk and refuse under them, and no amount of searching will turn up any useful items.

The lone tasloi sleeping in the bunk is one of the victims of continued exposure to the euphoria gas. As is the case with many mind-altering substances, there is a chance that the user could fall into a coma either when taking the substance or when coming off it. This tasloi is in such a comatose state. He will never wake up without the application of a *limited wish* or *heal* spell, and he will die in three days due to dehydration and starvation. His statistics are unimportant, as he poses no threat, and the party should not get experience points for slaying him when he is helpless.

If the tasloi were not alerted to the party's entry, five **tasloi** (hp 7, 6, 3, 2 (×2); see area 5 for statistics) are present. Three of these lie listlessly on their cots while the other two play at dice.

3. Storage (ceiling 4').

> Carefully maneuvering to allow the light from the fire outside to enter this small cave, you note that it contains a modest assortment of crates, boxes, bags, and bottles. Some of them are labeled in strange runes, but it is too dark in here to tell what they might be.

This is where the tasloi store their food, water, and other supplies. Generally, a tribe such as this would store only a small amount of food and rely on raids or hunting to supply their needs. Because of the possibility of a raid on their cave, these tasloi have stored a bit extra, mostly from the hut they found in the woods. They hope to live on it until they gain some tribute.

Most of the containers are marked with the name of the country or trading caravan they came from. The majority are stolen property, but the good-aligned party should not be required to return them, as all are of low value and the party has no ready means of locating the various owners. The items to be found, including their worth if sold at a market, are as follows:

- A box of 125 torches that burn for twice the normal duration (1 hour) from the Hullack Forest (25 sp total)
- An unmarked crate of 25 excellent mahogany tinderboxes (5 gp each)
- A large open burlap bag of flour (10 gp)
- Two crates of dried meat marked with the sigil of the Six Coffers Market Priakos (15 gp each)
- Four boxes of large, empty, stoppered vials labeled "Property of Andemon Willbender, Archwizard of Gulgroth" (150 gp total). Urglak plans to use these to bottle the euphoria gas.
- Two large urns of water from a nearby spring (10 gp each). The urns are marked "Azoun IV," the name of the present king of Cormyr.
- A bag of smoked fish (4 gp)
- Five small sacks full of charcoal, labeled "Highmoon Trading Coalition" (2 gp each)
- Nine boxes of assorted dried fruits from Archendale (50 gp each)
- Three bolts of fine green cloth wrapped in oiled parchment and labeled "Another Quality Product from Tasseldale" (100 gp each)
- Two crates of hardtack biscuits emblazoned with the trailglyph of the Dragoneye Dealing Coster (5 gp each)

DMs not using the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting should feel free to change these names to prominent trading cartels, individuals, or areas in their campaign worlds.

If the party tries to cart off the supplies, the total encumbrance is approximately 500 lbs. and takes up a considerable volume. A good-sized wagon would be needed to haul it all. See "Concluding the Adventure" for more information about the goods.

The tasloi will not stand idly by and let the party carry off their goods while they cower in the tunnel. As soon as the PCs begin to haul off any of the supplies, five of the tasloi rush out and attack while the rest wait to observe the result of the foray.

4. Barracks (ceiling 5').

> Though haze and smoke fill this room and make your eyes water, you can make out five rough cots against the walls. Scattered on and among the cots are all types of miscellaneous junk: bits of cloth, pieces of armor, scraps of food, bones, ash, and not a few small insects. Two sputtering torches light the room from the far wall, allowing you to see how badly the room is kept. Obviously, the creatures that inhabit this complex are not concerned about interior decorating.

This is another of the sleeping areas that the tasloi dug when expanding the cavern. During normal times, it holds five tasloi. The random junk on the floor is exactly that—worthless junk. A careful search of the area can turn up 4 gp stuffed in the mattress of one of the cots, money that was pilfered from Urglak while he was high on the euphoria gas.

The smoke that fills the room (and much of the complex) is from the torches that light the area. The fire at the front of the cave provides a slight draft that draws most of the smoke out of the cave, but not enough to keep the area from partially filling. The smoke is thick enough to be annoying but not enough to hinder breathing or other activity.

If the complex has not been alerted, five **tasloi** (hp 4, 3, 1 (×3); see area 5 for statistics) are lying about on their cots, playing with coins or collapsed listlessly.

5. The Stupor Squad (ceiling 5'; six torches). In order to get into area 5, the party is going to have to deal with the tasloi. If the complex has been alerted to the PCs' entry, the tasloi are assembled behind a large cluster of brush and

logs atop a 5' rise at the opening of the passage from area 1.

There are several methods that the PCs may use to solve this problem. Considering the typical adventurer's pyromaniacal bent, the first method proposed may be setting fire to the brush. Certainly, this will clear the brush, but it will not kill the tasloi, who retreat into Urglak's quarters (area 7). The draft provided by the fire at the cave entrance provides enough of a breeze to pull the smoke away, and small fissures in the dirt of the complex provide the tasloi with enough oxygen to live.

If the party thinks to put out the fire at the cave entrance (or did so when entering) before setting the brush aflame, the tasloi will be asphyxiated but so will Drake and any PCs who remain in the cavern (the DM should hint at this if the players do not think of it). The DM is urged to come up with other reasons (green, rotten, or damp wood; an unaddicted tasloi with a handy chamber pot; and so on) to keep the party from using this method.

The party may try to tear away the brush barrier, exposing the tasloi to attack. This gets rid of the brush, but the tasloi attack the PCs while they are working. The tasloi have the upper hand because they are attacking from a position 5' above the PCs, and they have partial cover until all the brush is removed.

If the party adopts this method, give the PCs a −4 on their to-hit rolls and a +4 penalty to their armor class to represent the height advantage of the tasloi. In addition, either side could easily withdraw from the fray by backing up a short distance from the ledge.

The party may think about trying to undercut the ledge on which the tasloi are standing. Make sure they quickly learn that this method will not work. The tasloi can see them digging and soon think of moving back. The tasloi can attack the party from above while they are digging, and the party cannot keep digging at a 5'-high, 9'-wide tunnel for long (the digging equates to 45 cubic feet of digging for every foot into the tunnel the PCs dig, plus an additional 200 cubic feet to represent the expanded section outside the tunnel). Digging (even with proper tools) takes approximately one minute per cubic foot removed.

The party will probably come up with other methods of reaching the tasloi in the tunnel. The DM should be fair but somewhat lenient on the party, as this is not meant to be too difficult a task. Since the tasloi have no range weapons, the PCs have all the time they like to get to the tasloi. However, if they decide to set up a siege by waiting in area 1 for the tasloi to get hungry, the DM should resort to alternate measures.

If the tasloi are made to wait over two hours for any action for take place, they suddenly remember the huge pile of junk in Urglak's room and will send a few of their number to cart it down to this area. Urglak allows them to do so, calling off his spider (see area 7). They begin to bombard the party with the junk. Treat thrown junk as hurled missile weapons with ranges varying from 10' for the heavier objects to 30' for small objects, doing 1-4 hp damage. Impose no nonproficiency penalty to the to-hit roll (tasloi are good at creative weaponry).

If the party still does not get the hint, five of the tasloi eventually burst through the barrier and charge the PCs, while the other 10 make a last stand in area 5. If a PC climbs the ledge while the tasloi are still atop it, three of the tasloi get a free attack against the PC, who gains no shield or dexterity adjustments to armor class.

Somehow, the party will end up having to fight the tasloi. When this occurs, the DM should remember that 13 of the tribe have a −2 to hit and a +3 to initiative due to the euphoria gas's addictive effects (see "Addiction"). The two that do not have this penalty are the 6- and 7-hp tasloi, who can also attribute their higher stamina (hit points) to not being addicted.

No more than two PCs can stand side by side in the narrow tunnel, although three tasloi may do so. The ledge can accommodate three PCs and four tasloi at the same time. During the battle, the tasloi fight to the death. They will not retreat further into the lair for fear of Urglak and the spider at area 7, which has been trained to attack anyone entering without Urglak's signal.

If given the opportunity to escape out the front after six of their group are slain, however, the tasloi will do so, returning later to attack again and recover their "magic gas" (see "Concluding the Adventure"). They fight in a disorganized fashion. Two tasloi may attack one PC while another PC is left open, and they frequently switch opponents each round. The DM should roll randomly each combat round to determine which PC a given tasloi attacks.

Further, during the charge to get to the PCs, one of the tasloi bumps into the wall, fall downs, then get back up and charges madly back the way he came (he can't figure out which way to go). During the battle, the DM may wish to add other such weird effects: A tasloi suddenly sits down and stares at the wall, swings madly at something that doesn't exist, and so on. The two unaddicted tasloi fight more coherently, attacking any obvious spell-casters first, then going for the strongest-looking PCs. They will not be in the first rank, however. Urglak will not enter the fray at any point, choosing to cower in his room in hope that his tribe, the trap at area 6, and the spider will take care of the intruders.

Once the party defeats the tasloi, they can enter the cavern. The DM should read or paraphrase the following to the players, modifying it as needed. The passage is written with the assumption that the party fought at least some of the tasloi in the room itself (perhaps by charging the ledge or by driving some of them back into the area).

> The room is in a shambles. The five cots that used to sit around the room's perimeter lie broken and overturned all across the floor. The scattered junk that lined the floor is now even more scattered. The mess reminds you of various tavern brawls that you have had the privilege of observing.
>
> Amid the junk lie the remains of the creatures you just faced. Their combat actions were decidedly odd. They fought with a passion you have rarely seen. It seemed as if they were obsessed with getting you out of their lair, almost as if they guarded a treasure beyond imagining. But their moves were slow and confused. They seemed to have trouble concentrating on what they were doing, as if they were sleep-fighting.
>
> Now that the little monsters are taken care of, you can move on to more important matters, such as exploring the two passages that lead out of the room, one to the north and one to the east.

The room is the sleeping area of the last five of the tasloi. The cots are similar to those in the other rooms, as is the junk on the floor. Nothing of value can be found in the mess. The northern passage out of the room is just a small alcove. It contains more miscellaneous items, but these are even more useless than the rest, as this is where the tasloi tossed those things that even they did not find interesting. The DM has the option of allowing a few of the tasloi to escape into this dead end, perhaps cower behind some overturned bunks or within the junk pile.

If the complex was not alerted and the tribe remains unaware, five **tasloi** (hp 2, 3 (×3), 4; see below for statistics) are collapsed in the room, idly fiddling with some of the junk or lying on their cots staring at the ceiling.

Tasloi (15): INT low to average (5-10); AL CE; AC 6 (5); MV 7 (9); HD 1; hp 7, 6, 4 (×2), 3 (×5), 2 (×3), 1 (×3); THAC0 21 (19) (the 21 includes the −2 to hit penalty); #AT 1 (+3 to reaction for 13 of the tasloi); Dmg by weapon type; SZ S; ML 8 (10); XP 35 each; MC2.

Six of the tasloi have clubs, five have short swords, and four have daggers. All carry shields and small pouches containing personal belongings. Each tasloi has 3-18 sp in his pouch, along with a collection of dead bugs, bits of cloth, pebbles, and other assorted junk. The statistics in parentheses are for the unaddicted tasloi, who carry 1-4 gp each in addition to the silver and are armed with short swords.

6. Trip Trap (ceiling 8'; no light). A trip wire is stretched across the passage here, approximately 6" off the ground. If no precautions are taken and no light source is used, the lead PC will trip over the wire. If a light is used, there is still only a 25% chance for the thin wire to be noticed. A slow, careful search of the passage will easily reveal the wire. The tasloi all know the location of the wire.

If the trap is triggered, a net drops from the ceiling. The net is fills the corridor for 15' and it is covered with small bits of metallic junk that act as an alarm for Urglak. The leading PC and the PC immediately behind him must roll a dexterity check at a +5 penalty. The next two PCs roll unmodified dexterity checks. Failure indicates that the PC is caught in the net.

To get out of the net requires a number of rounds equal to the amount by which the dexterity check was missed. For example, a PC with a dexterity of 12 is third in line when the net falls. The player rolls a modified 15 for the dexterity check. That PC will need three rounds (15 − 12 = 3) to get out of the net. If another PC helps the entrapped one, this time can be lessened to half of its original value, rounded up (two rounds for the previous example).

When Urglak (in area 7) hears the rattle of junk on the net, he quickly grabs his sword and shield and jumps into the alcove just north of the entryway to his room. If anyone enters his chambers before two minutes have passed from the tripping of the wire, Urglak attacks the intruder from behind. If no one enters within this time, Urglak comes out of his hiding place and peeks through the curtain at the eastern end of the passage to see if the intruders are still caught. If so, he rushes out and begin hacking at them wildly, doing damage to the hapless PCs (he gains a total of +2 to hit, because he has a +4 for the opponent being prone, and a −2 for his addiction). But in doing so, he also cuts parts of the net, reducing the time it takes for an entrapped person to escape by half (rounding up).

Urglak orders his spider (see area 7) to attack at this time, regardless of whether he himself attacks.

7. Urglak's Abode (ceiling 6'; continual light globe).

> In contrast to the gloomy firelit rooms in the rest of the lair, the chamber you have just entered is illuminated by a soft yellowish glow from a small globe on the far side of the room. Between you and that globe, though, sprawls an incredible assortment of supplies, equipment, and junk. A huge pile of filthy pillows lies against the wall to your left, while an even more enormous mound of junk completely covers the opposite wall. Between the two are scattered dozens of trinkets, coins, and other miscellany, all of it dirty and well abused.
>
> In the center of the room lies a scraggly looking spider. You have no idea if it is even alive, as it has not moved since your entrance.

If the net trap at area 6 has been set off, Urglak is hiding in the alcove just north of the entrance, waiting to strike the first person to enter his chambers. At the DM's option (for a struggling party, for instance), Urglak and his spider may instead set up a last stand in area 9, where the party must squeeze through the narrow passage in single file.

The DM may wish to place Urglak in area 9, getting a fix of the euphoria gas, so that the PCs can learn a bit about why the tribe is acting so strangely.

If the party did not set off the trap, and the DM rules that the PCs entered quietly enough not to alert the tasloi leader, Urglak is either sitting atop his bed of pillows or fiddling with one of the items in the room. He rarely leaves his quarters, lying about all day long and dreaming of all the tribute his tribe will receive.

Urglak (tasloi leader): INT average; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9, climb 15; HD 3; hp 16; THAC0 19 (includes −2 to hit for addiction); #AT 1 (+3 reaction due to addiction); Dmg by weapon type; SZ S; ML 10; XP 65; MC2; small shield, short sword, hand axe, dagger, neck pouch with a piece of coral worth 15 gp, belt pouch with 16 gp and 12 sp.

Urglak stole his spider from the old tasloi clan. The spider is alive only because of its species' sheer hardiness, as the tasloi treat it very poorly. Since the tribe has gone into seclusion, it has not been allowed to go out and hunt. Only the battering it has gotten from Urglak has kept it from eating either Drake or one of the tasloi. Due to lack of activity and improper feeding, its poison is weaker than normal. It will not engage in combat unless it is attacked or ordered to fight by Urglak (including the standing command to attack those entering the room). If Urglak dies, the spider will fight to the death, infuriated by its lack of activity over the past several days.

Large spider: INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6, web 15; HD 1+1; hp 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA save vs. poison at +2 or take 6 hp damage; SZ S; ML 7; XP 175; MC.

The pile of junk on the eastern wall covers the door to area 8, and consists of broken pottery, dirt, weeds, logs, brush, cloth, and other such useless items. If the pile is tampered with, there is a 10% chance that the whole thing will come tumbling down, raising a large dust cloud and revealing the doorway. The party will have to clear the rubble

out of the way before they can approach the metal door that is revealed. As soon as the dust clears, the PCs will be able to hear a faint scratching noise coming from behind the door.

Around the pillows (which are worthless) and on the floor, the following treasure can be found: 45 gp, 153 sp, 17 cp, four amethysts worth 25 gp each, two short swords, three footman's maces, six daggers, a large shield, two small shields, and four old tomes. Three of the tomes are dry dissertations on various areas of the Realms (or another campaign world), worth 75 gp each to a sage or collector. The other is a commentary on the ancient arts of divination (mostly superstitious rubbish), worth 250 gp to a diviner or sage. However, it contains a scroll, stuck between the last page and the back cover, that contains the priest spells *detect magic* and *find traps*. It will take the party two turns of searching to find all the items, increased to six turns if the pile of junk is upset and fills the room.

The final item in the room is the glowing globe in the northern alcove. This item and the books mentioned above came from a low-level wizard's caravan that the tasloi attacked on the East Way just outside of Highmoon. The globe is simply a small wooden sphere with a *continual light* spell cast on it. It currently rests on a small onyx pedestal in the alcove, as Urglak believes it to be a potent magical item. The whole apparatus is worth 150 gp to the right buyer.

8. Dwarven Tomb (ceiling 10'; no light). As soon as the junk is cleared away from the door, the scratching within will be audible. The iron door to this tomb has several runic characters engraved into its surface. Any dwarves in the party will immediately recognize them as dwarven runes, though they are in an ancient dialect that has been long forgotten. A *comprehend languages* spell will reveal their message: "The dead of Clan Glasshold, noble of the third prism. Year of the Clanhold 1273." Dwarven PCs will be able to tell that the door marks the burial place of a dwarf of high position. A PC who rolls a successful ancient languages nonweapon proficiency check discovers the meaning of about half the words.

If the PCs decide to enter this chamber, they must first get past the locked door. The door has triple locks, all of which must be opened to enter. The locks are of superior quality (−40% to open-locks attempts). To destroy them, a total of 20 hp damage must be done to each lock, rolling vs. an effective armor class of 2. Each blow made on a lock by an edged weapon requires the weapon to save vs. crushing blow (a roll of 7 or better for metal weapons, see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 39) modified by the difference between the to-hit roll needed to smash the lock and the amount rolled. For example, a 1st-level fighter using a long sword needs an 18 to hit the lock. If a 6 is rolled on the to-hit roll, the sword must save vs. crushing blow at a penalty of −12 (18 − 6 = 12) or be dulled beyond usefulness. If the same fighter rolled a 20 to hit, the sword would save vs. crushing blow at a bonus of +2 (20 − 18 = 2). Blunt weapons need not make the saving throw.

The iron doorframe is firmly set into the stone walls of the tomb, so digging in the dirt around it will not prove an easy solution.

Once the door is opened, the source of the scratching noises becomes immediately obvious. A corpse crouches on the other side of the portal, scratching at the door in an attempt to escape. It almost exactly matches the appearance of a ghoul, but it is of a dwarven form.

The corpse is the body of Gruumsted Nightforger, an ancient dwarven noble who betrayed his clan and was executed for his treachery. As he was of high station, though, his clan dug into a hillside, built a stone tomb, and placed his body within it, then refilled the tunnel with dirt, all per clan tradition.

But Gruumsted had hated his ruler (thus the betrayal) and especially despised his clan's decision to execute him. So strong was his will that he became undead shortly after his interment. Similar to a revenant, he has sought over the past 560 years to escape from his tomb and slay those responsible for his death. Due to the might of dwarven craftsmanship, however, the tomb has held.

When the tasloi uncovered the door and made preliminary plans to open it, the dwarf began scratching upon it in hopes of winning his release due to their curiosity. It didn't work. He has been scratching on the door ever since, still able to hear noises and feel life forces beyond the door.

As soon as the door is open, the creature rushes out into area 7. He then takes stock of his releasers, attacking any dwarves in the party in a blind fury, to the exclusion of all other PCs. If no dwarves are in the party (or once they have been slain), he runs out of the room (50% chance for each exit) in search of dwarves to slay.

If Gruumsted runs into room 9, he quickly returns and leave the other way, unless the party tries to stop him. If the party attacks or makes any move to stop him, he attacks the PCs without hesitation.

The creature is neither a ghoul nor any other common undead. Instead, he has the physical attributes of a zombie (though he moves faster). When reduced to 0 hp, though, he will rise again, having more than one "unlife" due to his intense hatred and strong will. This reanimation takes place two rounds after he is "killed." It can occur three times (for a total of four lives). Each separate animation is turned as a ghoul, and each is unaffected by previous turnings, successful or not.

The creature has no desire to kill nondwarves unless they stand in his way, and if he is let go, he will leave the cavern complex, traveling at top speed about the countryside looking for dwarves to attack (see "Concluding the Adventure"). The DM should keep in mind that the creature is a formidable opponent, and should give the party plenty of leeway to let it escape. If the PCs think they have destroyed the creature and leave the chamber, they will likely be absent when he reanimates, and he can thus escape.

Gruumsted Nightforger (special undead): INT exceptional; AL NE; AC 5; MV 16; HD 2; hp 11 each "life"; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SD returns to "life;" immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* death magic, poison, and cold-based spells; SZ M; ML special; XP 175. Holy water does 2-8 hp damage to Gruumsted. The undead dwarf does not have a zombie's restriction to attacking last each round.

Once the creature is overcome or escapes, the party may enter the tomb:

> Beyond the strange metal door lies a room unlike the rest of the complex. The most notable difference is that the walls are made of stone, as is the raised slab at the far end. The room is evenly constructed, as if planned by a master architect, and the walls are covered with more of the strange

runes. Except for the slab and the stone it rests on, the room is remarkably bare.

The runes on the walls are in the same ancient dwarven tongue as those on the iron door. If a *comprehend languages spell* is used (it may still be effective if cast previously), the runes can be deciphered to read: "Gruumsted Nightforger, traitor to his clan, accorded an honorable death to return to him a sense of duty and obligation."

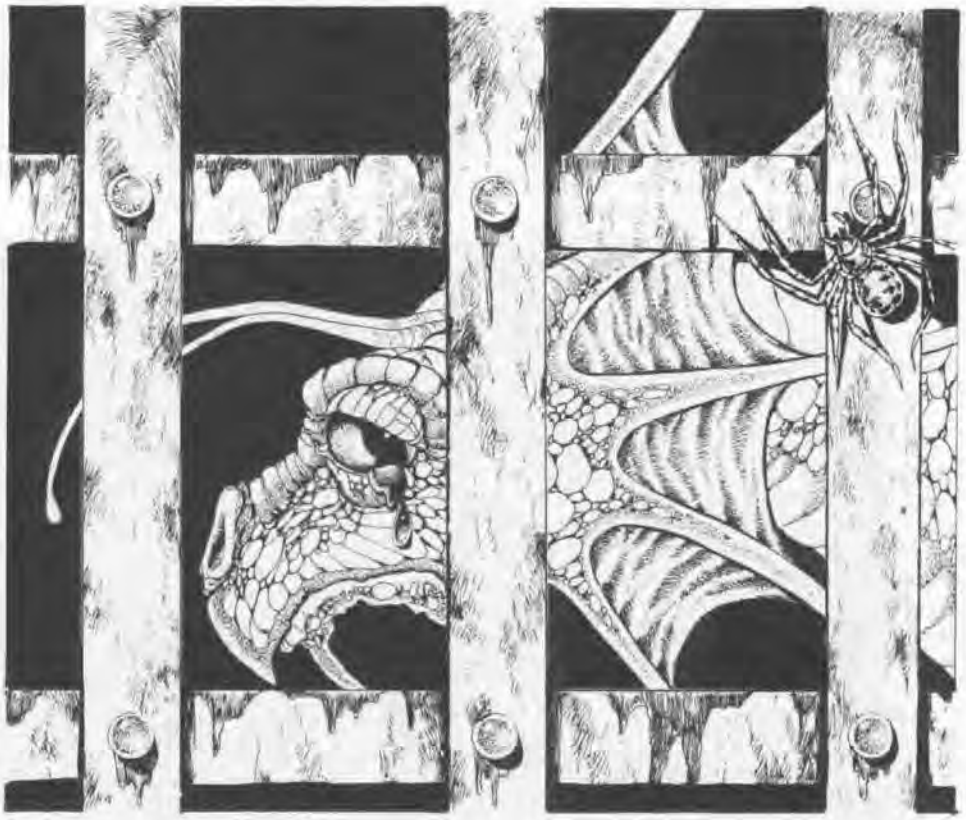
The slab on which the body was laid to rest can be readily moved aside to reveal a small compartment in the supporting stone. Four scroll cases in the compartment contain rolled sheets of vellum detailing Gruumsted's history, the trial proceedings that convicted him, and an outline of his clan's history. At the option of the DM, the writings may include a map revealing the location of the dwarven city (now abandoned) to lead to further adventure. The whole group of scrolls can be sold to a sage or interested party for 150 gp for their historical value.

9. Drake's Den (ceiling 5'; no light). The corridor into this room is only 2' wide, so characters in plate or banded mail will be unable to fit through wearing their armor unless they walk sideways. In addition, all those who go through will have to remove their backpacks and other encumbering gear and either leave it in Urglak's room (area 7) or drag it along behind them. The entry passage is small because Urglak wants Drake to have a difficult time getting out of the complex if he escapes from his cage, as well as forcing any intruders (or tribe members) to enter in single file. Occasional muffled noises can be heard from the room, so the PCs may well be (and should be) nervous about leaving their armor or belongings behind, but the narrow corridor prevents any other means of entry.

Once in the room itself, the party will need some light source (Urglak uses the globe from his room) in order to view the interior.

You hope that the contents of this room merit the tight squeeze required to enter it. Like the rest of the lair, it is dug out of earth, but the floor in this room is more level than in other areas. Though made of dirt, the room has been carefully, almost reverently maintained, as if great events or important ceremonies take place here. The floor is swept clean, and the walls are carefully packed and covered with stones.

As you ponder the room's uses, a muffled scraping sound comes from behind the heavy curtain that cordons off a corner opposite the entryway.



The room is indeed well cared for, as the tasloi consider it almost a holy area. The curtain covers the area where Drake is kept. There he sits in complete darkness, except for the few times daily that the tasloi come to have him breathe euphoria gas on them and the one time each day when Urglak brings him his food.

As faerie dragons are creatures of nature and require the freedom of the outdoors, Drake is slowly dying. He has finally decided that life is no longer worth living. He plans to use all of his remaining breath weapon attacks the next time the tasloi come to him. He knows that this will infuriate Urglak and the chieftain will probably kill him, but after two weeks in captivity, he has little hope of rescue and expects death to be better than his current predicament.

Drake has been waiting patiently for the tasloi all day. Unfortunately, he does not know that the PCs will be the next to open the curtain. When the PCs pull aside the curtain, Drake uses all his remaining breath weapon attacks (up to a dozen as determined by the DM) in quick succession. This is a special case that should not be allowed to normal dragons, nor to faerie dragons as a general rule.

Only after Drake has finished his last breath attack will he realize that he has made an error. If any of the PCs rush to attack him (believing him to be a threat), he quickly yells "Wait!" in high-pitched Elvish. If the entire party falls victim to the gas, Drake waits patiently for the PCs to stop their blundering about, then apologizes profusely in Elvish if he sees any elves. If no elves are present, he tries speaking each language he knows (see statistics) to see which one gets a response. If none of the PCs speak any of his languages, Drake gives up and tries to look humble

and apologetic, like a scaly puppy dog. If communication is set up, Drake immediately asks if the PCs know Michael and inquires about the boy's safety.

Once the party decides to release Drake, there is the matter of the cage, which was looted on the same raid that gave Urglak his magical light globe. The cage is made of 1" thick iron bars placed 2" apart and magically welded into a birdcage shape, with a solid iron plate making up the base. It stands 2' high and is only 1' in diameter, making it uncomfortable for Drake's 1' length. The lock on the cage door is of excellent quality (−20% to open-locks attempts).

When Drake was placed in the cage, Urglak discarded the key, so some other method is needed to gain entry. Bashing the lock requires 10 hp damage done to an object of AC 4. Apply the same rule for edged weapons as in room 8. Magic, heat, or large weapons used on the cage stand a good chance of harming Drake as well, and Drake will point this out if he is able.

Drake (very young faerie dragon): INT genius; AL CG; AC 5 (1 when *invisible*); MV 6, fly 24 (A); HD special; hp 4 (1 presently); THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA breath weapon, spells as a 2nd-level wizard and 3rd-level priest, attack as 4-HD monster; SD *invisibility* at will; MR 16%; SZ T; ML 11; MC3.

Drake has red-orange scales with a silver tinge, though his color has dulled because of his depression. He is in an unusual situation: Faerie dragons are creatures of nature, and are fully active only when in their forest homes. Though his breath weapon still functions, few of his other magical abilities do. He cannot turn *invisible*, cannot use spells, and is generally depressed and sluggish. Because of the rough treatment he has received at the hands of the tasloi, he also cannot fly.

Drake will recover his color and health within 24 hours after returning to the outdoors but will not be able to fly until his tattered wings heal in three days. He can speak Elvish and the languages of faerie dragons, sprites, pixies, and various forest creatures of the region. He can also use *telepathy* with other faerie dragons within two miles.

Concluding the Adventure

Because Drake cannot fly, he will rely on the party's help to get him back to his forest. He will try to convince them to carry him back but will not promise anything in return, as he is unsure of their intentions. If the PCs refuse to carry him, Drake crawls slowly away. The DM should try to make the PCs feel like greedy, malicious slime if it reaches this point.

Drake would like to get to Michael's house if at all possible. As is to be expected, Michael's parents have not changed their attitude toward adventurers (or nonhuman playmates). They will not allow Michael out of the house for any reason.

However, because Michael can speak the faerie dragon language and his parents cannot, he and Drake can communicate without their knowledge. In the past, Drake has turned *invisible* to sit on Michael's windowsill or even in his room so they could talk about whatever crossed their minds.

Since Drake cannot now turn *invisible*, he calls out to Michael from a distance. When Michael hears his friend's voice, he sticks his head out his bedroom window and calls back in the same language. They carry on a short conversation, and then Michael has to return inside before his parents come to see what he's talking so loudly about.

Before he leaves, Michael suggests that Drake give their new friends some items from his treasure trove. Drake makes this offer to the party in Elvish, then leads them to his nest in the forest, located about three miles east of Michael's house (the party cannot find Drake's lair on their own).

Drake offers the PCs their choice of two of the following: a green chrysoberyl worth 175 gp, a topaz worth 250 gp, a small silver statuette of a deer worth 275 gp, a mage scroll with two first-level spells on it (DM's choice), a potion of *extra-healing*, a potion of *levitation*, and a potion of *clairvoyance*. Drake knows what the potions are but does not know the worth of the gems or the statuette.

After the party chooses two items, Drake will bid them a good trip and promise them his assistance if they are ever in the region again. If the PCs were especially helpful, Drake may offer them one or two more items, though he will by no means give up more than four.

This adventure provides numerous ideas for further adventures. At the option of the DM, if the party delays too long in exploring the tasloi cave the Tribe of the Wishes may already have received envoys from neighboring tribes. If the party does not take action against the Wishes in time, these other tribes may send forces to capture Drake. The party will then have a much larger group of tasloi (or other humanoids) to contend with. As another option, even if the Wishes tribe is quickly dealt with, other tribes may well have sent exploratory or attack groups to the cave. If this is the case, the woods and surrounding villages will be beset by humanoid teams of various sizes and will need protection.

Another campaign idea involves the return of any of the stolen goods in area 3. If the party does return these goods, the merchant companies will be very appreciative, and may either hire the adventurers as guards or to go on special missions of various sorts. In particular, Andemon Willbender will be very grateful for the return of his vials and may offer employment. Gulgroth (the city where Andemon is archwizard) lies between the Orsraun Mountains and the Gulthmere Forest in Turmish. If any the tasloi from the Tribe of the Wishes or the dwarven "zombie" from area 8 escaped the cavern, they can be continuing threats to the party, hounding them for many rides to come. The possibility of a map from area 8 also provides an adventure idea. Further, if the "zombie" threatens the surrounding area, the local militia or villages could hire the party to find and destroy it. If the PCs tell them that they released it, the militia will require that they destroy it, since they are responsible for its release. Ω

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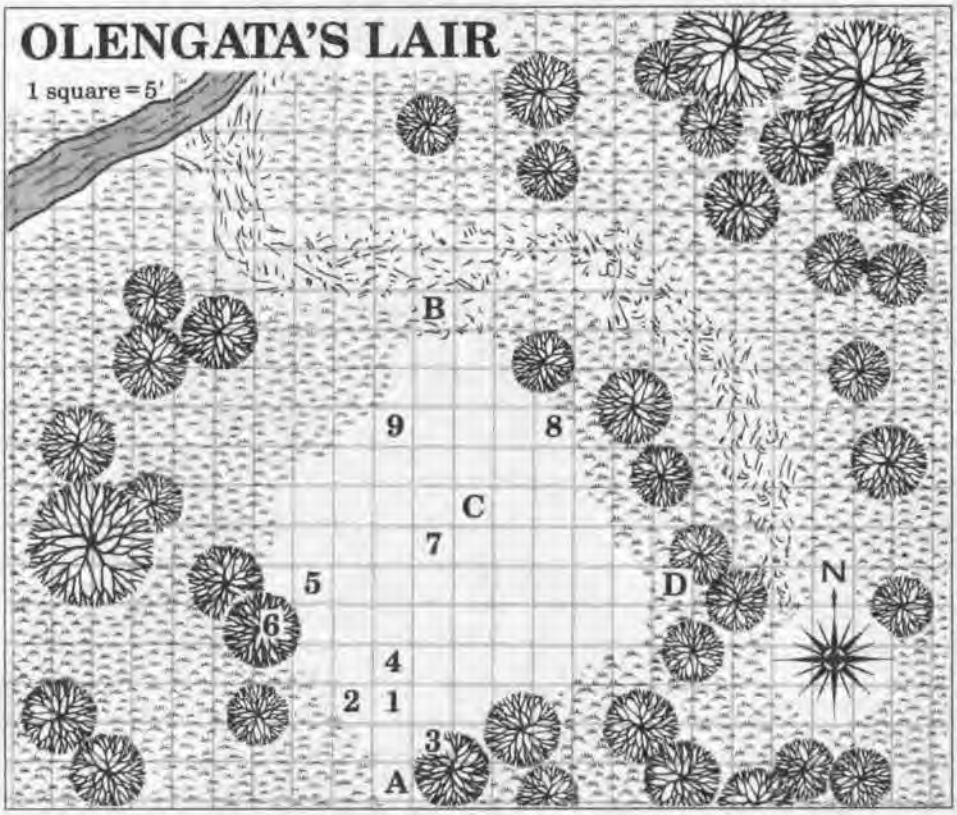

ROGUE

They never forget—or forgive.

BY DAVID HOWERY

This short AD&D® adventure is designed for 5-7 characters of levels 4-5 (about 27 total levels). The setting is any tropical jungle in the DM's world. At least one of the PCs should have the tracking proficiency (*Player's Handbook,* page 64).

For the Dungeon Master

Several months ago, a Watanga native set out on a hunting trip, as he had done dozens of times before. This time, however, fate was against him. The hunter stumbled upon the resting place of a huge bull elephant. Both were surprised, but as the elephant lurched to its feet, the native decided he was in danger. He threw his spear and struck the elephant in the flank. Enraged by the pain, the huge tusker quickly killed the luckless native. The spearhead broke off under the beast's skin, leaving a painful festering wound.

Since then, the elephant has been continually maddened by pain and has killed every human it has encountered. Hunters disappeared throughout the jungle as they encountered the bull.

As the death toll climbed among the Watangas, they sent out a hunting party to track down and kill the menace that was plaguing their people. The rogue bull killed all but one of the hunters; the lucky survivor escaped while the elephant was savaging one of the bodies. The surviving hunter returned to his tribe with tales of a huge rogue bull elephant with red-spotted tusks, which the Watangas named Olengata ("bloody tusk").

The Watangas appealed for help to their friends at the trading post called Fort Thunder, and some adventurers set out to kill the rogue. Olengata surprised the group and killed them all; hearing nothing from the group, everyone fears the worst. The Watangas are now desperate and have asked the merchant traders of the fort for help. The merchants, who depend on the Watangas to gather trade goods, have offered a bounty for Olengata.

For the Player Characters

The PCs are in Fort Thunder for reasons of their own, perhaps resting between adventures. The fort is a walled trading post on the edge of the jungle. As they walk about, the PCs see a notice being tacked up on a wall near the fort's main gate. It reads:

> Notice! Let it be known that the Merchants' Guild of Fort Thunder is now offering a bounty of 5,000 gold coins for the killing of the rogue elephant known to the Watanga natives as Olengata. Proof of this deed must be shown by presenting the distinctive tusks of the elephant to the guild hall. All interested parties must report to the guild hall for instructions.

If the PCs report to the Merchants' Guild hall, they are accepted for the job (along with several other adventurer groups, who all hope to collect the bounty). The PCs are told to join up with a trade caravan that is leaving the next day for a Watanga village. The trip takes four days. Since the caravan travels over a patrolled, well-known route, there are no encounters along the way.

Once all the adventurers reach the village, the Watangas assign each party a territory to search, fanning out from northwest to northeast. The Watangas do not know exactly where Olengata is and have spread out the hunting parties in hopes that at least one group will find the rogue. The PC party is sent out to the northeast. As the PCs search, the DM can use random encounters from a standard tropical forest encounter table (see the *Monstrous Compendium,* Volume One or Two).

After traveling for 2-5 days, the PCs find some unusually large bull elephant

tracks among the many elephant tracks in the area. Any PC with the tracking proficiency will be able to follow the huge bull's trail. It will take the party 2-12 hours to catch up with Olengata after finding his tracks.

Olengata's Lair

Olengata's favorite resting place is a grass-covered sward surrounded by trees and brush. Special rules for movement apply to the areas shown on the map:

Brush: This is thick tangled growth averaging 5' high. The PCs' movement through the brush is reduced by half. Due to his size, Olengata can move normally here.

Trampled brush: Olengata has crushed several trails in the brush. Movement over this ground reduces the PCs' movement rates by one. Olengata has no penalty.

Trees, grass: There is no penalty to movement in these areas.

A. Elephant Tracks. The PCs enter Olengata's grove here if they are following the rogue elephant's tracks. The trail of prints leads into the grass, then disperses into a jumble of tracks all over the sward.

When the PCs first enter the grove, a dozen vultures fly up from the grass at area C, squawking madly. This raucous noise alerts Olengata, who is resting nearby.

B. Elephant Path. Olengata has crushed this trail through the brush, leading to a small stream to the northwest. The trail curves southeast around the sward to Olengata's resting place (area D).

C. Skeletons in the Grass. Many of Olengata's victims are now skeletons whose bones litter the grassy clearing among the trees. Each group of skeletons is indicated by a number on the map.

1-4. These are the skeletons of the slain Watanga hunters. Each skeleton is clad in simple native dress and holds a large shield. Four snapped spears are scattered in the grass. None of the skeletons has any treasure.

5. These are the remains of a thief, one of the first adventuring party sent out from Fort Thunder. He was killed by Olengata's crushing feet. The skeleton still wears tattered leather armor and holds a rusted long sword. A pouch containing 18 gp lies beside the body; a broken short bow and eight sheaf arrows are hidden beneath the bones.

6. This skeleton will not be found unless the PCs search the trees above. Olengata crushed the mage of the first adventuring party, then threw his body into the branches. The corpse lodged on a limb high above the jungle floor and hangs there still, head downward. This skeleton has a robe, a dagger, a *ring of protection +1*, and 11 gp.

7. This is the skeleton of a fighter. His studded leather armor has a large hole in the chest, the entry wound from one of Olengata's tusks. The fighter still clutches his *spear +1*.

8. This skeleton was a priest who died under the rogue's stamping feet. The bones have been cracked and crushed so that little is salvageable, but there is a footman's mace and a pouch with 15 gp among the remains.

9. This skeleton was another fighter, the last of the party to die. A crushed leg bone and a gaping hole in the chest are vivid evidence of Olengata's savage attack. The dead bones grip a long sword and a large *shield +1*. The fighter's pouch holds 20 gp, but his chain mail is too torn to be usable.

D. Olengata's Resting Place. This is Olengata's current location. The brush in front of him is tall and thick, hiding him from view of anyone in the grass but also blocking his view of anyone hiding there. However, due to his keen senses of smell and hearing, the rogue will know where the PCs are at all times (−3 to be surprised).

Olengata has an animal's cunning for ambush. He waits until the PCs stop to examine the skeletons (area C) or start to move down the trail of trampled brush (area B) toward his resting place. Then, Olengata lurches to his feet and charges through the screening brush. This tactic gives him a +3 bonus to surprise the PCs.

If the PCs use certain spells (such as *invisibility to animals*), they can gain a momentary advantage. Flying or levitating PCs may spot Olengata hiding in the brush, but once the old bull sights the PCs, he attacks immediately.

Olengata, bull elephant: INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 11; hp 78; THAC0 8; #AT 5; Dmg 2d8 + 1/2d8 + 1/2d6 + 1/2d6 + 1/2d6 + 1; SA throw opponents, surprise foes; SD hard to surprise; SZ L; ML 20 (special); XP 7,000; MC. The rogue bull has a +1 to hit and damage because of his great size and experience.

Olengata is a fearsome sight when charging. His huge body moves almost impossibly fast, and his flaring ears and massive tusks seem unnaturally monstrous in the steamy jungle light. In addition to normal elephant attacks, Olengata has learned to throw man-sized opponents with his trunk, after squeezing them for normal damage. The rogue deliberately aims his victims at trees, inflicting 1-8 hp damage on impact. The old spear wound has maddened the elephant beyond endurance, and he will fight to the death.

Olengata's tusks are spectacular, as noted by the only Watanga to escape the elephant's rampages. These tusks are of the largest size (worth 600 gp and weighing 150 lbs. each), and are stained with reddish-brown spots. This discoloration (which the PCs may believe is blood) comes from the sap of a tree whose bark Olengata likes to chew.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs show Olengata's tusks to the Merchants' Guild, they will receive the bounty for killing the rogue elephant. In addition, they can keep the tusks and any treasure found on the skeletons. Having now proven their trustworthiness to the guild, the PCs may be contacted in the future for more special jobs, as devised by the DM.

It is possible that a benevolent party might manage to *charm* and *heal* Olengata. Only magical coercion will initially prevent the elephant from attacking humans, demihumans, and the like, though a druid or charismatic spell-caster might convince the beast to stop attacking people and at least remain neutral toward them. However, all the Watanga and inhabitants of Fort Thunder regard Olengata with fear and hatred for his depredations, and they will continue to hunt the beast with increasingly powerful and desperate measures until he is destroyed. Anyone who shelters or aids the elephant will be regarded as a dangerous enemy and will be treated as such.

After living most of his life in Dillon, Montana, David Howery recently moved to Idaho Falls. He has contributed many articles to both DRAGON® Magazine and DUNGEON Adventures. Ω

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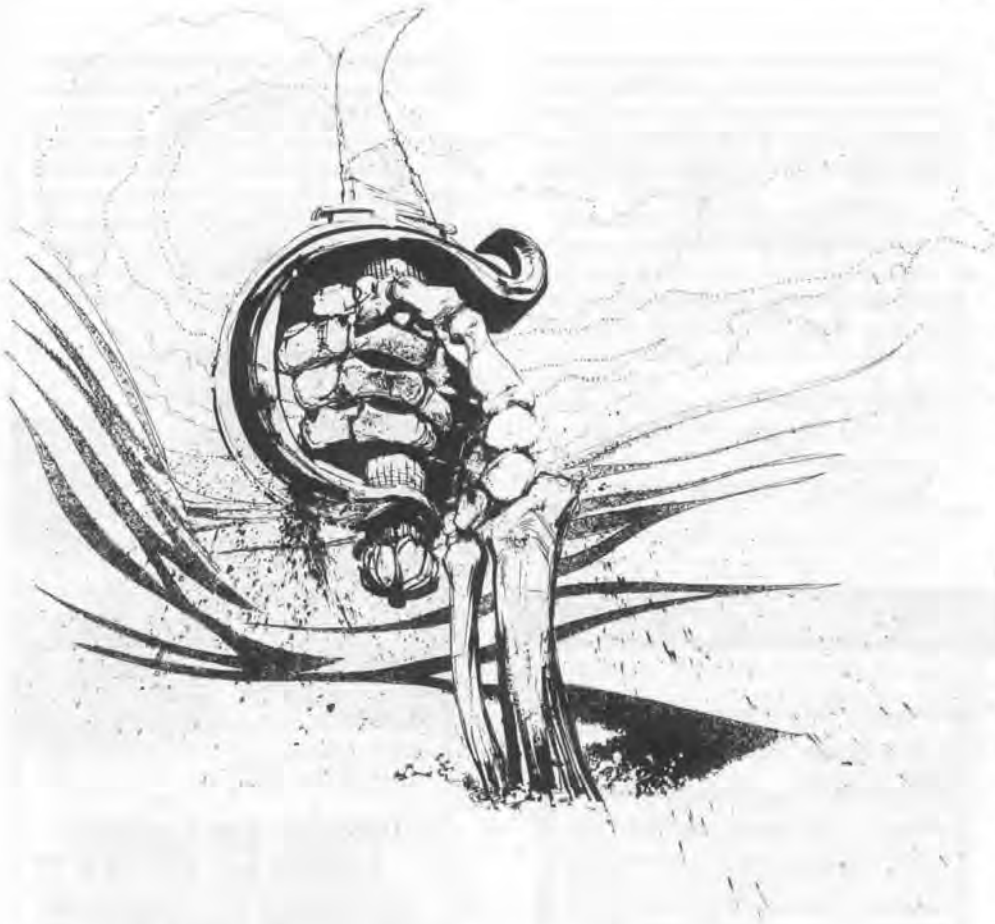


ISLE OF THE ABBEY

BY RANDY MAXWELL

Time to hit the beach.

Artwork by Peter Clarke

Randy writes: "My introduction to the D&D® game was the old, now legendary, blue book. From that introduction, I still retain a nostalgic fondness for low-level D&D adventures. The game has expanded immensely from those early, simple days, and my modules have expanded accordingly. For this adventure, I wanted to get back to basics (no pun intended) and do a module that required only the rules, monsters, and magical items from the Basic Set (either the old red boxed set or the new black box—the ancient blue book is not required).

"Isle of the Abbey" is a D&D adventure for 4-6 player characters of levels 1-3 (about 12 total levels). The adventuring party should be basically Lawful in alignment and of varied classes, with at least one cleric of 3rd level or two or more clerics of lower levels.

Although page references are given for the D&D *Rules Cyclopedia* (abbreviated *RC*), this adventure uses only those rules, monsters, and treasures in the New, Easy to Master D&D Game ("black box").

The exact location of the adventure is relatively unimportant. DMs using the D&D Known World campaign setting can place the island in any remote area.

Adventure Background

In the past three months, the evil clerics of Abbey Isle and a large band of local pirates have quarreled violently, and their struggle may have left the island uninhabited. The pirates burned the abbey to the ground, but they suffered so many casualties that they could hardly sustain themselves and thus were soon destroyed by the local mariners. Now, the mariners would like to claim the small, strategically located island and build a lighthouse there. So far, they have not been able to land safely on the island. Every attempt to come ashore has been met by a horde of undead.

The PCs are hired by the local mariners' guild to explore and clear the island of any hazards to building a lighthouse there. The guild is willing to pay 2,000 gp upon completion of the job, which will be verified by guild members before payment is made.

The mariners' guild will supply the adventuring party with transportation to the island. The party's jumping-off point is another lighthouse one day's

sail up the coast. This lighthouse is a safe harbor where PCs may retreat when they wish to rest, re-equip, or regroup.

The mariners' guild can supply the PCs with any of the equipment listed on page 69 of the *RC* except for holy symbols, holy water, thieves' tools, and wolfsbane. The guild cannot supply PCs with any weapons or armor. The price of any equipment used by PCs must be deposited with the guild and will be refunded on the return of the equipment or successful completion of the adventure.

The guild supplies the adventuring party with the boat and sailors needed to reach the island. The sailors will not come ashore or attempt to rescue the PCs if they get into trouble. The party should devise a set of signals between themselves and the sailors for drop-offs and pick-ups, etc.

Sailors (5): AC 9; 0-level human; hp 3 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 120' (40'); Save NM; ML 7; AL L; dagger.

For the Dungeon Master

The lighthouse where PCs begin the adventure is manned by a retired military officer named Major Ursa. The Major, as he is called locally, is a huge, barrel-chested man with a bright-red beard, and a circlet of thin red-gray hair on his balding head. He was once a military man and served in glorious conquests and bitter defeats. His usual raiment is a gaudy red and yellow kilt with his war hammer and dagger hanging from a broad leather belt.

Major Ursa: AC 6; F5; hp 22; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 120' (40'); Save F5; ML 10; AL N; S 18, I 17; scale mail, war hammer, dagger.

The Major has long since given up his fighting career and now lives the solitary life of a lighthouse keeper. While considered reclusive and eccentric by the locals, he is a respected member of the community and of the mariners' guild. If the Major is attacked by the PCs, the local citizenry rallies to his defense. The mariners' guild quickly places a bounty on the PCs, and the adventurers find that they have become hunted criminals. The Major does not have the guild's reward money or anything of value (other than food, drink, and nautical equipment) at the lighthouse.

The Major gives the PCs the following information concerning Abbey Isle:

> "The only safe place to get ashore on the reef-ringed, rocky little island is a large sandy beach known as the Skull Dunes. The dunes are full of undead because the clerics of the abbey created an army of skeletons to guard the beach. The skeletons lie in wait under the sand and attack anyone who comes near.
>
> "Me and a few of the boys have tried landing at different places on the dunes, but the skeletons seem to be everywhere. The poor lads I was with had no stomach for the battle, and I'm getting too old for such fights. When the skeletons started lurching up out of the sand and swinging swords at our heads, we legged it helter-skelter back to the boats.
>
> "The pirates got ashore somehow. There's probably a path through the undead, but finding it's the problem. We didn't catch up with the pirates till after they'd left the island. They'd apparently taken as good as they gave. They were a miserable, sorry lot when we attacked and routed what was left of them. One shipload managed to sail to safety, but we sank the others. The sea and the sharks got the survivors, so we never got a firsthand account of what happened on the island or of how the pirates got through the dunes. Maybe there are no safe paths, but you never know till you try.
>
> "As for the abbey, who knows for sure? We never got anywhere near the place. Smoke rose from the island for days after the pirates attacked. Maybe that means the island's been abandoned, or maybe the abbey burned and the clerics are waiting to rebuild. I don't know. That's what you have been hired to find out."

Major Ursa is not placed here as a convenient mercenary and will not automatically join the PC party. The Major should accompany the party only if it has made at least one attempt at landing on the island, and the island's defenders or defenses are obviously beyond the PCs' capabilities. He will go along only to help clear the island for the mariners' guild; he is not interested in searching for treasure.

If the Major accompanies the party, the guild must find and pay a replacement to man his lighthouse while he is away. Therefore, the PCs' reward is reduced to 1,000 gp. Also, if the Major accompanies the PCs, he receives one full share of the reward and one full share of any treasure found on the island.

In game terms, Major Ursa's primary purpose is to serve as an NPC conduit when the DM wants to give information to the players. At the DM's discretion, the Major can also offer suggestions, advice, and occasional helpful hints. These hints should not be given on demand.

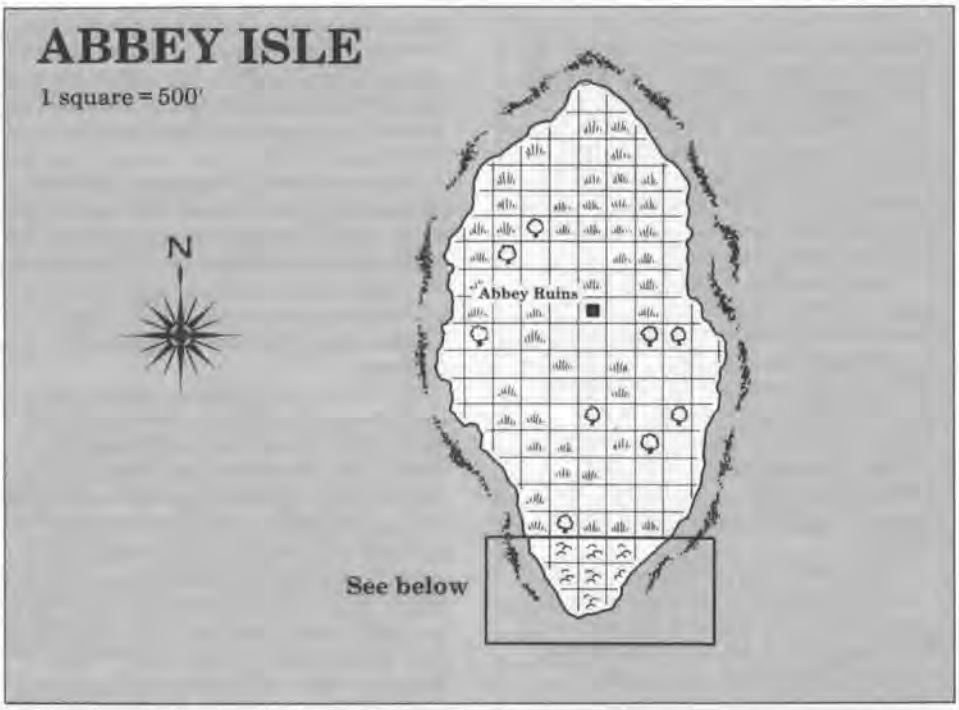
The Major's suggestions concerning the tactical situation on the island are dependent on how much information the PCs give him about the island, its inhabitants, and its traps and monsters. Questions such as "How do we get through the tunnels underneath the ruins?" are inappropriate because the Major has no way of knowing there are tunnels under the abbey. The PCs must first describe the tunnels (see "The Winding Way") and the situation there before the Major can give advice. The Major may not have advice on every subject. Possible suggestions the Major might make are included under the appropriate headings. The PCs need not follow any of the Major's advice.

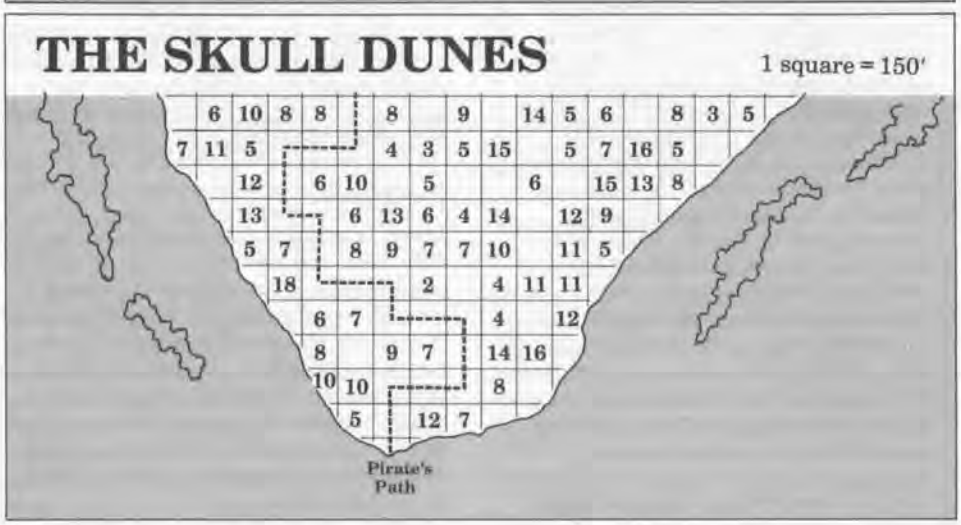
The Island

Abbey Isle is a small island about a mile wide and two miles long. It is little more than a great slab of rock rising from the ocean. The sea has battered its crumbling cliffs so that almost the entire island is surrounded by dangerous rocky shoals. The waves crashing and splashing over the jagged rocks make it obvious, even to landlubbers, that any attempt to navigate the shoals can end in only disaster.

In fact, there is no reason to pass through the dangerous rocks, for the granite cliffs beyond them rise directly out of the water, offering no place to land or come ashore. Only the dunes at the southernmost tip of the island offer a safe place to land a boat (see "The Skull Dunes").

The island has little wildlife but is covered in grass, small flowering plants, and a few gnarled, stunted trees and shrubs. What little wildlife there is on the island was imported by the clerics, either deliberately or accidentally, when they built the abbey (see the "Abbey Isle Wandering Monsters" sidebar). The





island is two hours sail from the mainland.

The Skull Dunes

The Skull Dunes lie beyond a beach of coarse brown sand at the southern end of the island. The dunes are desolate; only an occasional bit of scraggly grass grows here and there in the sandy hollows. When the abbey was built, the evil clerics populated the dunes with hundreds of skeletons brought from the mainland for the defense of the island. The overlord of the abbey carried a special scepter that allowed safe passage through the dunes, but this scepter was destroyed in the fire that razed the abbey.

The skeletons now form an uncontrolled minefield of undead. When anyone passes near, the undead rush up out of the sand and attack. The skeletons are impossible to avoid by stealth because they can detect intruders by noise, ground vibrations caused by movement, and pressure on the sand. When the pirates attacked, the skeletons made them pay dearly, but the pirates eventually cleared a path through the undead and pushed on to the abbey.

If the PCs enter the dunes, the DM must keep track of the party's location on the Skull Dunes map. Assume that the PCs land at the southernmost tip of the dunes unless the players decide otherwise. The map shows the areas guarded by undead and the wandering path made by the Chaotic pirates.

When the PCs first enter the dunes, the hills of sand are unruffled and trackless. Travel through the loose sand of the dunes is difficult, and movement rates are reduced by half

If a PC enters an unmarked square, nothing happens. Anyone entering a square marked with a number is immediately attacked by that number of skeletons. The number of skeletons marked is the maximum number of skeletons in that area. For example: The PCs enter a numbered square marked "7." This means that seven skeletons rise and defend that particular square until they are destroyed. If five of the seven skeletons are destroyed, only two skeletons rise and attack on a PC's next entry into that square. Once all the skeletons in a square have been destroyed, that square is cleared and safe to enter (this does not stop other skeletons from pursuing PCs into that square).

If the PCs walk along the line directly between two guarded areas, they are attacked by the skeletons from both areas. If PCs pass over the junction where four squares meet and form a cross, they are attacked by the skeletons from all four areas (or from those of the four areas that are actually guarded).

When attacking, the skeletons rise from the sand in a single round. They are encrusted with sand but unhindered by it, so they retain their normal movement rate while in the dunes. Each skeleton is armed with a rusty short sword or decrepit cutlass. The swords do normal damage (1-6 hp each) but are too rusty and damaged to be salvaged or sold by PCs. Because Major Ursa has already warned the PCs about the skeletons, the PCs should not be surprised by them. Initiative is rolled normally.

Skeletons: AC 7; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 60' (20'); Save F1; ML 12; AL C; XP 10; RC 204.

The skeletons defend only their own squares and will not pursue beyond 50' of that square. Also, skeletons do not

pursue into the water. Sea water does them no harm—they have simply not been ordered to defend that area. Thus, coming ashore and then wading around the dunes is a clever way to avoid the skeletons, although climbing the cliffs may prove just as deadly. Do not drop hints to the players about this; let them figure it out or fight through the dunes.

After driving intruders from their square, the skeletons rebury themselves in the sand. This gives PCs an advantage because they can see where the skeletons have hidden and can mark these areas. However, the constant sea breezes over the loose sand of the Skull Dunes will destroy all footprints and other markings within 24 hours. If the PCs mark the guarded areas, they must use something permanent, such as sticks, shells, etc.

Clerics may attempt to turn the undead after the skeletons have risen from the sand. All attempts to turn undead before they rise from the sand fail automatically. If a cleric turns one or more of the skeletons, the undead do not run away but immediately rebury themselves in the sand. Turning lasts 1d10+4 rounds for all skeletons turned by a turning attempt (not per skeleton). After this time, the skeletons rise and attack again if the PCs are still in the area.

If the PCs attack buried skeletons, they suffer a −2 on to-hit and damage rolls because they cannot see where to strike and the sand cushions the blow. If a buried skeleton is attacked, it and all other skeletons in that square rise and attack (even skeletons that have just been turned).

How the PCs map the dunes is their own affair. However, the DM can suggest, either as a mapping hint from Major Ursa or as a useful hint from DM to players before the game starts, that a large grid system for the dunes is helpful.

If the PCs are unable to force a path through the dunes, they may return to the lighthouse and ask Major Ursa for advice. If asked what tactics might work against the skeletons, he suggests the following: "Clear out a spot or two in the Skull Dunes to use as fighting room and safe areas, then explore and test the dunes until a path is cleared." If even more basic advice is needed, he tells the PCs: "Fighters and clerics are valuable assets here. Other party members should attempt to draw the undead out and allow the fighters to destroy them or the clerics to turn them."

Abbey Isle Wandering Monsters

After the PCs have passed the Skull Dunes and are on the main portion of the island, the DM should roll 1d6 six times per day: at sunrise, noon, sunset, midnight, and twice at the DM's discretion. If the result is a 1, an encounter occurs.

Outdoor encounters differ from normal dungeon encounters because they begin at much longer distances. Distances depend on terrain and available light (*RC*, page 93). To determine encounter distance during the day, roll 4d6 and multiply by 10 to produce a number between 40 and 240. This number is the distance in yards at which the monster is first encountered. Night encounters are at a distance of 2d6 × 10 yards, because the creature must come into the light or into infravision range to be seen (though it may be heard coming at a much greater distance).

If an encounter is called for, roll 2d10 and consult the following table:

2: **Zombies** (5): AC 8; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1 claw or 1 weapon; Dmg 1-8 or by weapon type; MV 90' (30'); Save F1; ML 12; AL C; XP 20; RC 213. These creatures move about as a pack and are always encountered as a group rather than as individuals. If the PCs destroy one or more zombies in an encounter, reduce the number appearing for any further encounters. Once all five zombies have been destroyed, treat this option as no encounter.

3-4: **Stirges** (1-4): AC 7; HD 1*; hp 4 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; MV 30' (10'), flying 180' (60'); Save F2; ML 9; AL N; XP 13; RC 208. These creatures feed primarily on the mules, rats, and giant rats that populate the island. They are aggressive and more than willing to vary their diet by tasting adventurers. Once all four stirges have been dealt with, treat as no encounter.

5-7: **Giant centipede** (1-6): AC 9; HD ½*; hp 2 each; #AT 1 bite; Dmg Poison; MV 60' (20'); Save NM; ML 7; AL N; XP 6; RC 163. These creatures can be found under rocks, in piles of trash, and in any damp hollow on the island.

8-11: **Normal rats** (5-24): AC 9; HD 1 hp each; #AT 1 bite per pack of 5-10; Dmg 1-6 plus disease; MV 60' (20'), swimming 30' (10'); Save NM; ML 5; AL N; XP 2; RC 201.

12-14: **Giant rats** (2-12): AC 7; HD ½; hp 3 each; #AT 1 bite each; Dmg 1-3 plus disease; MV 120' (40'), swimming 60' (20'); Save NM; ML 8; AL N; XP 5; RC 201.

15-17 **Mule** (1-2): AC 7; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1 kick or 1 bite; Dmg 1-4 or 1-3; MV 120' (40'); Save NM; ML 8; AL N; XP 20; RC 195. The abbey's mules have gone wild and now roam the entire island. The mules are inoffensive and will not attack unless provoked. The DM is strongly advised not to give experience points for the pointless killing of mules and is well within his rights to deduct experience points from a PC's total for such actions. If the PCs capture the mules in order to sell them or use them as pack animals, give full experience-point value for each mule captured. Captured mules may be sold for 30 gp each. The mules suffer greatly from lack of water, so PCs may capture them using fresh water as bait. There are only five mules on the island. Once all are captured or killed, treat as no encounter.

18-19: **Skeletons** (10): AC 7; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 60' (20'); Save F1; ML 12; AL C; XP 10; RC 204. Like the zombies listed previously, these creatures roam in a pack and will always be encountered together rather than individually.

20: **Giant black widow spider:** AC 6; HD 3*; hp 15; #AT 1 bite; Dmg 2-12 plus poison; MV 60' (20'), in web 120' (40'); Save F2; ML 8; AL N; XP 50; RC 206. This spider was once a pet of the abbey's overlord. It escaped from its wooden cage when the abbey burned, and now it roams the island in search of prey. The spider is always hungry and is an aggressive hunter. If the black widow spider is killed, treat this result as no encounter.

The Survivors

Abbey Isle is not uninhabited. A few of the abbey's clerics and guards managed to survive the pirate attack and now live a spartan life in the ruins. They have made rough accommodations for themselves in the abbey's cellars. The abbey's vegetable garden and a few kegs of corned beef and salted pork also survived the pirate attack. The survivors fish from the lower cliffs and raise buckets of sea water up the cliffs by rope. By casting *purify food and water* spells on the sea water, the abbey's clerics create enough water for their drinking, cooking, washing, and gardening needs.

Unfortunately for the survivors, they have no boat and no means of building one. The island's few stunted trees and gnarled bushes are incapable of supplying the wood for even a crude canoe or raft. The survivors have no control over the undead of the Skull Dunes and would have to fight their way through the skeletons to launch a boat (they are unaware of the path made by the pirates). They are effectively trapped on the island while everyone else is kept off.

The survivors keep a very low profile. They stay close to the ruins of the abbey and keep out of sight of passing boats. They do not hail boats or ships or light signal fires. Trapped on the island since the pirate attack, they are unaware that the pirates have been destroyed. They are therefore very hesitant to make their presence known for fear the pirates will return and finish them off.

While the survivors desperately want to leave the island, their superiors would not approve of their abandoning the island to the mariners. Both the clerics and the surviving guards would be severely punished (the death penalty or worse) if they left the property they are responsible for. For this reason, they will attempt to capture or kill anyone coming to the island and take their boat through treachery or force of arms. If any PCs are captured, they are kept alive only if they can be used in negotiations to extract a ransom. Ransom demands are likely to include a boat or at least transportation to the mainland.

The survivors' main goal is to send word to their superiors while still retaining possession of the island. In this way they hope to receive reinforcements, laborers, and material for rebuilding the abbey. They keep watch on the Skull Dunes during the day, but the giant spider and the roaming undead (see the "Abbey Isle Wandering Monsters" sidebar) often force the lookouts to retreat to the cellars below the ruined abbey. Therefore, there is a 50% chance of landing unseen at the Skull Dunes during the day. The survivors do not keep watch at night out of fear of the spider and undead. The PCs have a 100% chance of landing unseen at night. The PCs can still be heard at night if they make a great deal of noise fighting the skeletons in the dunes.

The survivors may be above ground getting water, fishing, or gardening during the day, or they may be in area 2 of the ruins. At night they stay in their rooms. The survivors are:

Ozymandias: AC 6; C4; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; MV 120' (40'); Save C4; ML 9; AL C; XP 175; *leather armor +1;* war hammer; spells: *cure light wounds, light, hold person.*

Ozymandias barely survived the battle with the pirates because he attempted to rescue important books and scrolls from the burning abbey, and a collapsing hall closed a doorway behind him. He was forced to abandon the written works, and he escaped only after a wall collapsed and freed him.

Technically, Ozymandias is now the "High One" and the leader of the survivors. He is a capable administrator, but he does not inspire loyalty or trust in those under him. Underlings obey him because of the hierarchical structure of the abbey's chain of command, not because he shows any strong leadership. If attacked, he defends himself to the best of his abilities. If the PCs attempt to negotiate, Ozymandias is treacherous and unlikely to keep any agreement (except at sword point). He wants to send word of the abbey's destruction to the mainland, and he hopes to hold the island until help arrives.

Ozymandias wears a special medallion that allows safe passage past the undead guardians of the Winding Way (the tunnels below the abbey ruin). The medallion is a gold disk inscribed with complex geometric designs worth 30 gp. It is not magical, but undead of the Winding Way recognize it and allow anyone possessing the medallion to pass safely (unless the undead are attacked). Only the undead guardians recognize the medallion, and it cannot be used for safe passage past traps or other guardians in the Winding Way or for protection from any other undead on or off the island. The undead will not obey orders from the person wearing the medallion. In addition, the medallion protects only the person wearing it.

As the highest-ranking cleric left on the island, Ozymandias has inherited the medallion as a symbol of the faith, but he doesn't know about its powers or about the dangers of the Winding Way. His superiors considered him too insignificant to trust with such information.

Odium: AC 8; MU5; hp 12; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; MV 120' (40'); Save MU5; ML 8; AL C; XP 550; *ring of protection +1, dagger +1;* spells: *magic missile, shield, mirror image, web, dispel magic.*

Odium was visiting the abbey on business when the pirates attacked. He is no coward and gave a good account of himself during the battle, though he survived by sheer chance. He ran through the burning building to save his spell book and other valuables. As the flames mounted, Odium was forced to retreat to the cellars with his rescued goods.

He is a grumbler and annoys everyone with his constant griping. Odium and Ozymandias dislike each other intensely. If one gets into trouble, the other will do absolutely nothing to help.

Odium has business elsewhere and desperately wants to leave the island and get on with his life. If PCs do not attack Odium immediately, they may be able to strike a deal with him. His primary demand is to get off the island. He will draw the PCs a rough map of the abbey ruins for 200 gp and safe passage off the island. (If this occurs, the DM need only draw PCs a rough map of the cellars without including the Winding Way.) Odium will refuse to join the PCs in a fight against the other survivors.

Bayleaf: AC 3; E3; hp 12; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; MV 120' (40'); Save E3; ML 9; AL N; I 17, W 16; XP 80; chain mail, *shield +1,* sword, dagger, *elven boots;* spells: *charm person, sleep, phantasmal force.*

Bayleaf is a mercenary who works for the highest bidder. He was hired by the abbey as a training instructor for the guards. If PCs do not attack him immediately, negotiation is possible. Bayleaf can be bought off for 500 gp and safe passage off the island. He will not draw a map for the PCs or help them attack his former employers, but he will tell them there are treasure-filled tunnels

beneath the abbey. If pressed, Bayleaf admits only that the treasure is guarded (true) and claims it is worth 10,000 gp (false).

Bayleaf survived the battle with the pirates by making them think he had jumped to his doom from the cliffs. In fact, he stood at the edge of the cliff and cast his *phantasmal force* spell to make it appear he had jumped to his death. If cornered by the PCs, Bayleaf will use this ruse or something similar again.

Bayleaf is an excellent swordsman and an above-average tactician in small skirmishes. Ozymandias has placed him in charge of defending the cellars. If Bayleaf is captured, killed, or bribed, defense of the cellars becomes a hectic, haphazard affair.

Ogmund the Strong: AC 4; F3; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 120′ (40′); Save F3; ML 11; AL C; I 7, S 17; XP 35; chain mail, shield, sword, dagger.

Ogmund is a huge, stupid, mean-spirited fighter. In battle he is awesome, wielding his sword untiringly. During the battle with the pirates, a blow from a war hammer knocked him unconscious. He was left for dead and later was dragged to safety by clerics retreating to the cellars. He is embarrassed that he did not die in the battle and will not make this mistake twice.

There is no negotiating with Ogmund. His demands are simple: surrender or fight. As a tactician, Ogmund is wholly wanting. He is likely to overlook the simplest of ambushes, and his only offensive tactic is a headlong frontal attack. Ogmund feels he should be in charge of defense and resents the presence of Bayleaf. He will gladly leave the elf in the lurch should the chance arise.

Clerics (4): AC 6; C3, C2 (×2), C1; hp 11, 7 (×2), 4; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; MV 120′ (40′); Save C3, C2 (×2), C1; ML 5; AL C; XP 50, 25 (×2), 10; leather armor, shield, mace; spells: (C3) *cure light wounds, light;* (C2, #1) *cure light wounds;* (C2, #2) *purify food and water.*

These remnants of the abbey's clerics are not a particularly spirited lot. After the devastating loss to the pirates, they are not eager to join battle with anyone. These low-level clerks and helpers survived the battle and burning of the abbey by hiding in the cellars. Although the heat, smoke, and lack of fresh air might have killed the clerics in a well-sealed room, the cellars of the abbey are riddled with small rat passages and ventilation shafts that pulled air in from the outside, drawing the heat and smoke upward and permitting the clerics and their guards to survive the flames.

The clerics perform those functions needed for the survival of the group. They fight only if absolutely necessary and will surrender at the first opportunity if any fight turns against them. If questioned, they know very little about the island and the abbey.

Guards (3): AC 5; F3, F1 (×2); hp 12, 5 (×2); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 120′ (40′); Save F3, F1 (×2); ML 10; AL N; XP 35, 10 (×2); chain mail, short sword, dagger.

These disciplined warriors are the last of the abbey guard. All three were dying of their wounds when they were found and healed by the clerics. Ozymandias has ordered them to obey Bayleaf, but they prefer Ogmund as leader because he is one of them and not a hired sword. They will fight to the death to save the clerics. If the clerics surrender, the guards' morale is lowered to 5.

The Abbey Ruins

The pirate attack on the abbey came as a complete surprise to the clerics, since the pirates and clerics were in league with each other. The pirates fenced much of their booty through the clerics, who shipped the goods to distant temples where they could be sold without being recognized as stolen merchandise.

The Abbey Isle clerics often cheated the pirates on these clandestine deals. The pirates grumbled and made threats about the poor treatment they received, but they did little to alter the arrangements. Thus, while the two groups had their differences, the clerics did not think the pirates would attack. The clerics were confident that, even if the pirates did attack, they could not command enough force to break through the Skull Dunes defenses.

Unfortunately for the clerics, the pirates did have enough manpower to break through, barely. After their losses in the Skull Dunes, the pirates were in such a vengeful mood that they immediately set fire to the abbey. The battle for the little island was fought in the glow of the burning building.

Because the structure was aflame, the pirates never had a chance to loot the building or find the cellars. The air pulled up into the fire from the cellars guaranteed a hot, steady burn, and as the flaming structure collapsed, it buried the cellar entrance in smoking debris.

After the battle, the pirates gathered what loot they could and abandoned the smoking ruins, unaware they were leaving survivors behind. When the smoldering wreckage cooled, the survivors forced their way out through the rubble.

1. Rubble and Cellar Entrance.

> All that remains of the abbey is a great square of stones filled with burned and blackened rubble. However, as you approach the sooty stones, it is obvious someone has been sorting through the debris. Assorted oddments are piled inside the scorched square of the foundation stones. Ruined cooking utensils, crushed pots and pans, mangled kettles, and less identifiable metal objects lie in one pile. Broken crockery, platters, plates, porcelain, and pottery are heaped in another. A great deal of wood has been sorted into one large mound of badly burned scraps. In the center of the ruins is an opening, and as you move nearer, you see a stone staircase leading down into darkness.

If the PCs investigate the piles of rubbish, they find nothing of value. The survivors have sorted through the remains of the abbey, and all valuable or usable objects have been removed. The pile of charcoal is used as smokeless fuel for cooking and heating. The stairs are fire-blackened and lead down to a badly charred door, which can be forced as a stuck door (*RC*, page 9).

If PCs are unable to force a way into the cellars, they may return to the lighthouse and ask the Major for help. He gives the following advice: "If there are survivors who won't come out of the ruins, take a load of green wood to the island and smoke them out." (This won't work because smoke rises out of the cellars). Other advice from the Major is: "Negotiate, and give safe passage to anyone who wants to leave the island." Experience points should be awarded for clearing the island of survivors by negotiation because this accomplishes the PCs' goal.

2. Main Area.

> This appears to be a combination dining hall and recreation area. The room reeks of greasy, soured food. The main feature of the room is a large makeshift table made of two badly burned planks placed side by side and supported at either end by up-ended barrels. Beneath the table are several small empty kegs that serve as chairs. The table is not very clean; scraps of food are strewn across the planks and on the floor nearby. Scattered about the room are smaller makeshift tables. Several have dice, cards, or other gaming tokens on them.

This is the dining and recreation area for the survivors. There is a standing argument between the guards and clerics over who should keep the area clean. As a result, no one is willing to clean the place. There is nothing of value in the room.

If the PCs attack, the principal fighting will happen here. Ogmund seldom sleeps in his quarters (area 4) and often spends his time here, dicing with his fellows. There is a 75% chance of finding Ogmund here at any time of the day or night gambling with one guard and one cleric. There is only a 25% chance that each of the following is here: Ozymandias, Odium, Bayleaf, another guard, another cleric. If an attack occurs, Ogmund gives a tremendous war cry that rouses everyone in the cellars.

3. Kitchen.

> This seems to be the survivor's kitchen. A large cauldron filled with smoldering charcoal burns in the center of the room. Plates, cutlery, cups, kettles, pots, pans, and other assorted cookware are stored on the floor and on shelves. One shelf holds several bottles of spices and seasonings, such as salt, pepper, and sage. There is also an ornate scroll tube on the shelf. The room is fairly clean, but the air is humid and greasy. A large tub of dirty water stands in the corner, surrounded by a great number of dirty dishes.

The large cauldron was originally used in the abbey laundry. The survivors rescued it from the ruins and now use it as a fire pit for cooking. Meals prepared here consist primarily of boiled vegetables and fried meats. If the PCs search, they find little of value except three large butcher knives (treat as daggers). The scroll tube on the spice shelf is worth 10 gp but contains only a scroll of simple recipes.

4. Ogmund's Quarters.

> This chamber reeks of wine. Small kegs are scattered everywhere. A floor to ceiling wine rack filled with bottles dominates the southern wall. A crudely made pallet of rags and sacks covers the center of the room.

The old wine cellar serves as Ogmund's private quarters. If the PCs investigate, they find that all the kegs and every single bottle in the wine rack is empty. There is little for the survivors to do, so they have slowly consumed the wine. All the smaller empty wine kegs have been removed and now serve as chairs in the main room (area 2). If the PCs search Ogmund's pallet, they find a pouch containing 25 gp and a *dagger +1*. A search of the large wine casks

reveals one that contains a suit of leather armor, a short sword, and a pair of good quality boots. The wine rack holds nothing but empty bottles.

5. Barracks.

> Three crude pallets lie on the floor, and a large iron kettle stands in the center of the chamber. In the northeast corner is a jumbled pile of broken lumber.

If PCs investigate the pallets, they find nothing but rags stuffed into flour sacks to make crude mattresses. The kettle contains only ash and charcoal burned for heat. The lumber in the corner fuels the kettle. If the PCs search through the lumber, they find the guards' weapon hoard hidden behind it: five spears, a short bow and quiver of 20 arrows, two short swords, three daggers, two shields, and one man-sized suit of leather armor. The PCs may use this equipment or sell it for the prices listed on pages 62 and 67 of the *RC*.

6. Meditation Room.

> This room has been cleared of all debris and scrubbed clean. Three walls are heavily curtained with draperies of thick black velvet, and the eastern wall is decorated with a horrible mural depicting a red dragon devouring sheep. Near the western wall is a stone table on which a large iron brazier burns. The table has been scrubbed and scoured, but it has many odd discolorations and scorch marks. A half-melted statue and two badly damaged candlesticks sit beside the brazier.

This was a meditation and study room before the abbey burned. The clerics still perform what few rites and ceremonies they can given the circumstances—the furnishings have all been salvaged from the rubble. The table, which was discolored by the fire and heat, serves as the ceremonial platform where incense is burned and where larger sacrifices are made by burning rich, costly items in the brazier. The candlesticks are gold but are so damaged that they are now worth only 5 gp each. The statue is vaguely humanoid but was partially melted by the heat. It is solid silver and worth 20 gp. Unfortunately, the rich, black velvet curtains are old, mildewed, and rotting. PCs may sew the material into bags or sacks, but the velvet is worthless and cannot be sold. Hidden behind the curtains on the southern wall is the door to the Winding Way.

7. Ozymandias's Quarters.

> This room is full of kegs, bags, and boxes. There is a rough cot in one corner and a great deal of clutter everywhere. Except for the cot, this appears to be nothing more than a disorganized storage room.

The room is Ozymandias's bedroom, office, and storeroom. If PCs search the jumbled mess, they find a few kegs of corned beef and pork; bags of beans, rice, and flour; and a couple of boxes of fresh vegetables from the abbey's garden. They also find gardening tools; a keg of nails; a box of carpentry tools (saws, hammers, planes, etc.); three lanterns; 10 flasks of oil; two 50′ coils of rope; 20 torches; and two 10′ wooden poles. Under the rustic cot are two potions of *healing* in crystal decanters. The decanters are worth 20 gp each.

8. Bayleaf's Quarters.

> This appears to have been an armory. There are empty racks for holding spears and swords, and several empty bins and shelves. On the floor is a bedroll of three blankets next to a pair of shiny leather boots.

The armory of the clerics and the abbey guards is now devoid of arms and armor. Weapons that survived the battle with the pirates are scattered among the survivors and hidden in a new armory (see area 5). Bayleaf now uses the old armory as his private quarters.

If the PCs search the bedroll, they find a small pouch containing 15 gp. Hidden under some rags in an empty arrow bin is Bayleaf's spell book. In addition to the spells he has memorized, the book contains *read languages, read magic,* and *locate object.* The boots are Bayleaf's extra pair. Hidden in the toe of the right boot is a silver medallion worth 20 gp. If the PCs make a deal with Bayleaf, he will take the coin pouch, spell book, boots, and silver medallion with him when he leaves the island.

9. Odium's Quarters.

This room contains small statues and figurines. There are statues of dogs and horses, monks and pilgrims, footmen and knights on horseback, and several garden gnomes. All the statues are from 1'-3' tall. Standing against the northern wall are two life-size statues. One is a robed skeleton holding a large scythe, and the other is a medusa. On the floor directly in front of these statues is a pallet of several blankets.

Odium now lives in this storage area. If PCs inspect the small statues and figurines, they discover that they are all badly made of glazed clay. The two large statues are made of stone, and each stands on a large square base. They were used as scarecrows in the garden. However, the island's birds were soon no longer frightened by them and began roosting on the figures, so they were removed to the cellars. Bits of old birds' nests can still be found in the medusa's snaky hair and between the skeleton's ribs. The PCs may remove the statuary they wish. The mariner's guild will charge a stiff fee for transporting them, and the PCs will soon discover that no one wants to buy an ugly statue of Death or a medusa.

If PCs move the medusa statue, they discover that the base is hollow. Odium has placed his spell book, a pouch containing 40 gp, and a scroll with the spell *ventriloquism* in the empty space. In addition to the spells Odium has memorized, the spell book contains *read magic, detect magic,* and *knock.* If the PCs make a deal with Odium, he takes these treasures with him, and the PCs find nothing in the statue's base.

10. Clerics' Quarters.

The cold air in this room has the dry, papery smell of a library. There are several large bookcases against the walls and a high chair and scribes' desk to the right of the door. The bookcases are loaded with books, tomes, and scrolls. Four bedrolls are stacked neatly in the corner.

The four lower-level clerics make this room their home. They do not heat the room for fear of setting the paper alight. The bedrolls are made of blankets and hold nothing of interest or value. If the PCs search the desk, they find two vials of rare ink worth 25 gp each. A careful search through the books and scrolls in the bookcases will reveal two clerical spell scrolls: *light* and *bless.* The majority of the books and scrolls are merely abbey bookkeeping and of no interest to the PCs. However, one set of five books is of a more sinister nature.

These five tomes have old, fragile pages and are bound in thick, cracked black leather trimmed in copper. If the PCs examine them, they discover the ancient books give procedures and details for a number of evil rites and ceremonies. The books make grim and harrowing reading for any PC not bent toward evil.

If the PC party destroys the books, give each party member a 100 XP bonus. If Lawful PCs keep and sell the Chaotic books, each party member is penalized 100 XP, and the 50 gp sale value of the books is deducted from the party's total experience points.

The Winding Way

When the abbey was constructed, these meandering tunnels were dug beneath

Winding Way Traps

Trapped areas in the Winding Way (areas 11-14) are denoted by letters.

A. Trip Wire. This is a taut wire stretched across the corridor. When any PCs are within 10' of the trip wire, roll 1d20 for each PC; the PC sees the wire on a roll of 19 or 20. The PCs can easily defeat these traps by simply stepping over the wire or by tripping the wire from a safe distance with a pole or other object.

Tripping the wire or snagging a foot in it immediately releases a large stone directly overhead, doing 1-6 hp damage to anyone below who fails a saving throw vs. wands. A successful saving throw means the PC has jumped or rolled out of the way of the falling stone. Once a wire is tripped, that trap is safe until reset.

B. Open pit and illusion. This is an open 6' × 6' × 10' pit. Any PC falling into the pit takes 1-6 hp damage. The pit is covered by an illusion (a permanent *phantasmal force* spell) of solid floor. PCs can discover the illusion by a *detect magic* spell, by probing ahead with a pole or other object, or by falling into the pit. A *detect magic* spell will show only that a 6' × 6' area of the floor radiates magic. It does not dispel the illusion. A *detect invisible* spell is ineffective because the pit is merely hidden, not invisible.

C. Pit traps. This 6' × 6' × 10' pit is covered by a trapdoor painted to look like the surrounding floor. The trapdoor gives way when a weight greater than 50 lbs. is placed upon it, dumping the PC, object, or monster into the pit. The fall does 1-6 hp damage, and the trapdoor swings shut automatically one round after opening. These traps can be defeated by probing ahead with a pole or heavy object. If a *knock* spell is used within range of these pit traps, the trapdoors open for one round and reveal the trap's location.

D. False door with overhead block. This is a very simple trap. When anyone attempts to open the door by pushing or pulling on it even slightly, a stone block above the door falls and does 1-6 hp damage to anyone beneath. The PC must make a saving throw vs. wands to jump out of the way of the falling block. Once the block has fallen, the trap is useless until reset.

E. Door with Crossbow. This door is wired to a crossbow placed in a niche at an angle to the door (see the Winding Way map). When the door is opened to an angle of 45° or more, the crossbow fires into the opening. Anyone in the line of fire takes 1-6 hp damage from the quarrel. The crossbow is 4' off the ground and may fire over the heads of halflings and dwarves. Anyone standing behind the shorter folk will be struck. If the door is pushed open with a pole or other object, the quarrel ricochets harmlessly off the wall. Once fired, the crossbow is useless until reset. The crossbow is permanently bolted in place; any attempt to remove one for sale or use by PCs may damage the bow and render it useless (DM's discretion).

it for treasure storage. Only the abbot was privy to all the Way's secrets, and he died in the fire. The tunnels are well made, with smooth walls, floors, and ceilings 10′ overhead. The Winding Way contains an abundance of traps and guardians to protect the abbey's treasure. Traps in the Winding Way are denoted by letters. When the PCs enter a trapped area, consult the "Winding Way Traps" sidebar.

The Winding Way contains only two types of guardians: living statues and undead (for ease of reference, those DMs using the new D&D set may wish to change the crystal and iron living statues to wood and bone golems respectively). Use the following statistics when any of these guardians are encountered:

Living crystal statue: AC 4; HD 3; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6; MV 90′ (30′); Save F3; ML 11; AL L; XP 35; RC 208.

Living iron statue: AC 2; HD 4*; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8 plus special; MV 30′ (10′); Save F4; ML 11; AL N; XP 125; RC 208.

Skeleton: AC 7; HD 1; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 60′ (20′); Save F1; ML 12; AL C; XP 10; RC 204. If turned, these undead stay away from the turning cleric for 1-10 rounds.

Zombie: AC 8; HD 2; #AT 1 claw or 1 weapon; Dmg 1-8 or by weapon type; MV 90′ (30′); Save F1; ML 12; AL C; XP 20; RC 213. If turned, the zombies stay away for 1-10 rounds (as above).

If the PCs are unable to penetrate the maze of the Winding Way and ask the Major's advice, he states simply: "Seal it off lads. No treasure's worth your life." If pressed, he will continue: "Magic-users and thieves are valuable in such labyrinths. Use spellcraft and thief abilities rather than pure force." The Major has no inkling that a medallion exists that allows easy passage past the undead.

11. Entrance Guardroom.

> You have found a short tunnel beyond the drapes, an entrance to hidden passages, it seems. The tunnel air is stale and stuffy, but not foul. After 20′, the tunnel widens into an unfurnished and undecorated 30′ × 30′ chamber. Standing across the center of the room are five ghostly white skeletons, each with a short sword in its bony hand. Five corpselike figures stand shoulder to shoulder, guarding a door in the eastern wall. Their faces have been painted in gruesome colors.

Unless a PC is wearing Ozymandias' medallion (see "The Survivors"), the **skeletons** (hp 5 each) and **zombies** (hp 9 each) move forward immediately to attack anyone entering the area. The undead attack until they are destroyed or the intruders have been driven away. They pursue intruders throughout the tunnels but do not leave the Winding Way. Once intruders have been killed or driven back through the door of the room, the undead return to their original positions.

The clerics painted the zombies' faces to give them a horrible and more fearsome appearance, although the result in some cases is to make them look like undead clowns. The paint jobs are supposed to be death masks: the face is painted stark white and the lips, nose, and eyes are painted coal black.

12. Hallway Guardroom.

> The hallway widens out suddenly into a bare 50′ × 50′ chamber. Standing close to the southern wall are two ranks of undead, five skeletons in the front rank and five corpselike figures in the second. Standing directly in the exit in the southern wall, effectively blocking it, is a large crystal statue of a minotaur.

The behavior and battle tactics of the **skeletons** (hp 5 each) and the **zombies** (hp 9 each) are the same as for those in area 11. The minotaur statue blocking the southern exit is a **living crystal statue** (hp 14). It does not move until the undead have been turned or have joined battle with the intruders. The statue then attacks the nearest trespasser. Like the undead, the statue attacks until all intruders have been killed or driven from the complex. The statue does not pursue beyond area 11 and returns to its original position once intruders have been dealt with. The command words ("Taurus movere") used to bypass the statue safely were lost in the destruction of the abbey.

13. False Treasure Room. After the twisting corridor, the PCs come to a large iron-bound wooden door that is both locked and trapped. If the trap is not removed, any attempt at opening the door causes a large vial of poisonous gas to drop from the ceiling and shatter on the floor directly before the doorway. The gas immediately fills a 10′ × 10′ area for one full turn. When it dissipates, it leaves an incredible stench.

Anyone caught in the gas must save vs. poison or take 2-8 hp damage from the foul air. After the trap has been removed or the gas cloud has dissipated, the PCs may open the door by picking the lock, by casting a *knock* spell, or by battering the door open. The door is treated as an AC 9 target with attackers receiving a +2 bonus on to-hit rolls. The door takes 15 hp damage before opening.

> The large chamber before you is unfurnished and undecorated. Chests, urns, and a large strongbox stand in alcoves placed uniformly along the walls. Some chests are open, and you see jewelry and coins spilling out. Colored flashes of light sparkle with the promise of gems and jewels. In the very center of the room is a crystalline statue of a beautiful elf maiden.

The statue is a **living crystal statue** (hp 14). If the PCs either attack the statue or touch a chest, an urn, or the strongbox, it attacks and pursues them ceaselessly until it is either destroyed or the PCs are driven from the Winding Way. It will not pursue beyond area 11.

If the PCs investigate the treasure chests and urns, they find the treasure is worth less than it seemed. Gold-painted wooden coins, iron rings painted silver, and bits of colored glass fill the chests and urns.

The strongbox is trapped and locked. Anyone attempting to pick the lock without first disarming the trap is jabbed by a poisoned needle. The poison affects the nervous system and causes a severe loss of muscular control. Any PC jabbed must save vs. poison or his Dexterity is reduced by −5 (to a minimum of 3) for 1-10 days. The strongbox contains nothing but old rags, bits of metal, and a small piece of paper with the message: "Dear thief: A lot of work for nothing, wasn't it." Directly behind the strongbox is the secret door to the real treasure room.

14. Treasure Room.

This room is a large square whose ceiling is held up by two massive gray granite pillars. The walls, floor, and ceiling appear to be made of shiny black iron, and there are several bags, chests, and urns scattered about the room. As you look about, you notice a shimmering in the air, as if you are looking through the heat rising from a campfire. Suddenly, the shimmering passes between you and one of the pillars and you can tell what it is—a humanoid form made of the same iron as the walls.

The walls of the chamber are cloaked by a permanent *phantasmal force* spell. This illusion makes them appear to be made of shiny, black iron and also makes it difficult to see the room's guardian, a **living iron statue** (hp 19), which surprises on 1-3 on 1d6. It immediately attacks anyone entering the room who fails to give the proper passwords ("Mortem obire ex machina").

The statue is of basic humanoid form but has been constructed purely as a fighting machine. The head is a smooth, featureless iron ball. The torso is short and broad, while the legs are thick and stumpy. The arms of the statue are its weapons. The right arm, from elbow to tip, is a razor-sharp sword blade (1-8 hp damage). The left arm appears normal from shoulder to wrist. However, the arm does not end in a hand but in an iron ball (1-8 hp damage).

If the PCs overcome the statue and search the bags, chests, and urns, they find a total of 1,500 gp in mixed coins (primarily silver pieces). Another 1,000 gp in gems and jewelry can be found in the urns. A large chest (locked but not trapped) in the northwest corner contains five bolts of rare silk worth 100 gp each, two potions of *healing*, a scroll containing the spell *cure light wounds*, and a jeweled sheath for a dagger (worth 50 gp).

Concluding the Adventure

If the party is unable to find or make a path through the Skull Dunes, they receive nothing from the mariners other than the return of deposits on borrowed equipment. If the PCs clear or find a path through the Skull Dunes but are unable to clear the island of the surviving clerics, they receive a 100-gp reward from the mariners' guild. PCs are given the full bounty if they clear a path through the Skull Dunes and kill, deport, or capture the survivors of the abbey. Captured survivors are held by the mariners' guild until construction of the lighthouse is well underway before they are released.

If the PCs complain about low pay, Major Ursa can remind them they were hired to perform a specific service, and payment can and will be withheld until the island has been cleared.

Once the mariners take control of the island, it is unlikely that the evil cult that built the abbey will try to retake it. To do so would require bringing troops through hostile waters (the area around the island is controlled by the mariners) to attack the island. This requires a much larger force than they are capable of mustering at present. However, the cult will not forget about the island or the PCs. Thus, those DMs wishing to place this module in the context of a larger campaign can use the area and cult as a source of future conflict and adventure. Ω

YOU'RE LOOKING AT A LETHAL WEAPON.

Before you take another bite, think about the fact that a diet high in cholesterol and fat can load your blood with cholesterol, which raises your chance of heart attack. In fact, more Americans may die by the fork than by any other weapon.

American Heart Association WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE

Alvestar Jankins

Foleas

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Magazine Set Three

You hold in your hands the result of an experiment that has gone very well for TSR, Inc. These trading cards have proven themselves highly useful to collectors and game players alike. The cards in this magazine are from the first print run of 1992 and are rare in themselves. Your comments have made them as good as they are, and we thank you for your efforts.

Every year from now on, you can expect a sheet of cards in this magazine. These cards are automatically valuable and will make your magazine more collectable. These cards will also be highly useful in your fantasy campaign. There is nothing like a free deal that's a great deal, and this deal is both.

Mellenea

Guido del Confuso

Aurora

"Thalios" (Maltus Vindir)

"Slipper" Kindric

Zinnabar Albbee

In May of this year, a limited supply of the first half of the series of cards will reach store shelves everywhere. In July, the second half will reach the stores; again, there will be only a limited supply of these. These will all be first-print-run cards, and no more of these special cards will ever be printed. The 1992 factory set of second-print-run cards will be out in November. Again, a limited number of these sets will go out to stores everywhere. Please write to me and tell me what you think of these cards or any of TSR's products.

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DragonLance™ Trading Cards

Foleas

13th-level Warrior

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 2
THACO: 5
MOVEMENT: 6
HIT POINTS: 81
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
EQUIPMENT: Field plate armor, *two-handed sword of wounding, gauntlets of ogre strength*
BACKGROUND: Foleas remembers the War of the Lance as the happiest days of his life. He enjoyed sacking towns, getting drunk with draconians, and even throttling one or two passed-out baaz, just to watch them turn to stone. Now he leads a band of thieves outside of Sanction, and he talks incessantly of the "good old days."

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Alvestar Jankins

6th-level Cat Burglar

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THACO: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 26
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic good
EQUIPMENT: Thieves' tools, *slippers of spider climbing, flatbox*
BACKGROUND: Alvestar's dexterity (18) provides him with an AC bonus. He has never been able to resist opening things and looking inside. His father tried in vain to use more and more locks around the house, and Alvestar felt obliged to open them all. He doesn't really care about wealth; he simply loves getting away with what he steals.

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Aurora

9th-level Wizard

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: −1
THACO: 18
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 47
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: *Bracers of defense AC 2, ring of air elemental command, wand of lightning, ring of invisibility, boots of Elvenkind, dagger +1*
BACKGROUND: Aurora's dexterity (17) gives her an AC bonus. She is a genius (Int 19) who loves research and views the world as one huge laboratory for learning. One of her goals in her adventuring career is to amass a huge library. Her familiar, a great horned owl, is her constant companion.

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Guido del Confuso

8th-level Priest

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 7
THACO: 16
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 42
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: *Cloak of protection +3, robe of blending, mace of disruption*
BACKGROUND: Guido's preoccupation with wine, women, and gambling barely leaves him enough time to pray for his spells; sometimes they fail him. However, he is so good of heart that his god has not forsaken him. He is not interested in wealth or glory, but adventures purely "for the sport of it." Of course, a captured wine keg always helps!

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Mellenea

14th-level Psionicist

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 10
THACO: 14
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 41
ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil
EQUIPMENT: *Robe of scintillating colors, silver sword, elemental compass*
BACKGROUND: Mellenea is adept in the psychoportive devotions and spends a great deal of time *probability traveling* on the Astral plane, looking for wanderers to rob or enslave. She has the *silver sword* of a defeated githyanki and often casts *graft weapon* upon it to sever the silver cords of those who refuse to serve her.

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SPELLJAMMER™ Trading Cards

Zinnabar Albbee

17th-level Wizard

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: −3
THACO: 15
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 38
ALIGNMENT: Lawful good
EQUIPMENT: *Ring of wizardry, ring of protection +6, necklace of adaptation, robe of the archmagi, well of many worlds*
BACKGROUND: Zinnabar reminds you of your grandmother, and she loves to grant childish *wishes*. She has been wandering through wildspace "on an extended retirement tour" so long that she doesn't quite recall her home world.

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"Slipper" Kindric

4th-level Rogue

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 9
THACO: 19
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 18
ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil
EQUIPMENT: Thieves' tools, *manual of stealthy pilfering*
BACKGROUND: Slipper, so named because she has been caught at the scene of the crime several times but never apprehended, enjoys a bonus to her AC because of her dexterity (16). Her main goal is to please her guildmaster because she wants to work her way through the ranks and become a guildmaster herself. Hence, she frequently volunteers for jobs that are beyond her capabilities.

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GREYHAWK™ adventures Trading Cards

"Thalios" (Maltus Vindir)

7th-level Spy

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 5
THACO: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 30
ALIGNMENT: Lawful neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Elven chain mail, cloak of elvenkind, ring of mind shielding*
BACKGROUND: Maltus has been a mole in the Valley Militia, helping to guard the Valley of the Mage for six months. His mission is to wait until a band of humans enters the valley at midnight and calls out, "The Black One awaits the dawn," at which time he will kill his watch companion and secret the party past the guard.

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Chobin "the Punkster"

6th-level Wizard

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 4
THACO: 19
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 14
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic neutral
EQUIPMENT: Ivory-spiked leather armor, *ring of protection +2, ring of shocking grasp, crystal hypnosis ball*
BACKGROUND: The Punkster stole a cursed *crystal hypnosis ball* from his former master, not knowing its true nature, so that he could use it to find his parents. Since then he's found monsters everywhere that he's looked. So far Chobin's managed to survive, but his constant bad luck has given him an "attitude problem."

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Darwell Tectite

11th-level "Box-man" Rogue

RACE: Dwarf
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THACO: 15
MOVEMENT: 6
HIT POINTS: 43
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: Thieves' tools, *chime of opening, bag of holding*
BACKGROUND: Darwell is a lock-picking specialist whose talents are available only through her guildmaster. Due to her excellent dexterity (18) and extensive training, she has a 95% chance to pick almost any lock she encounters. Darwell believes in stealing only from the wealthy, and she refuses jobs that would leave anyone financially ruined.

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Aruthir

9th-level Druid

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 0
THACO: 15
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 71
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Bracers of defense AC 2, scimitar +3, medallion of adaptation, ring of protection +2, ring of feather falling, staff of Kitsyrral*
BACKGROUND: Aruthir divides his time between scouting (in hawk-form) with his pet, Lari, and acting as healer for his adventuring party. His *staff of Kitsyrral* allows him to store ten spell charges in it and cast any spell (in his spell spheres) upon demand. Aruthir is handsome and extraordinarily vain about it.

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Jastus

5th-level Barbarian Warrior

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THACO: 14
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 40
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic good
EQUIPMENT: Stone knife, *boots of the north*
BACKGROUND: Jastus's superior strength (18/88) improves his THACO by 2. Metallurgy is unknown to Jastus's tribe, so he believes that his stone knife is the deadliest weapon ever constructed, and he uses it very well. Jastus has heard tales of warmer lands far to the north of his home, but he believes that they are inhabited by fire creatures and he wants no part of them.

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FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Trading Cards

Hm-boye

3rd-level Warrior

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THACO: 18
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 18
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: *Ring of jumping*
BACKGROUND: Hm-boye's mother reputedly came from Kara-Tur, but Procampur is the only home he's ever known. Hm-boye lives in a rough neighborhood near the wharfs, where he gets plenty of chances to combine his acrobatic martial arts prowess with standard weapon techniques. He's not a criminal, but the city guards usually try to arrest him on sight.

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Lady Wendolyn of Gaunt

10th-level Cavalier

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: −3
THACO: 11
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 83
ALIGNMENT: Lawful good
EQUIPMENT: *Plate mail of fear, shield +2, horseman's flail +1*
BACKGROUND: Wendolyn began her training in horsemanship at a very early age and became a much better rider than her elder brothers before she was ten years old. She would like to be a paladin like her mother, but she has never heard the call of the gods and she doesn't believe that any of the existing orders are deserving of her faith and talents.

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FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Trading Cards

Reptilla Half-elven

12th-level Wizard

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: −1
THACO: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 35
ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil
EQUIPMENT: *Bracers of defense AC 4, cloak of displacement, curdled death*
BACKGROUND: Reptilla's high dexterity (17) provides her with a bonus to her AC in addition to her magical protection. She and her familiar, Thsst, inhabit a cave on the sunny side of one of the Dragonspine Mountains, where they waylay lone animals and travelers for Reptilla's experiments in the making of poisons.

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Phun Ach-mana Phun

14th-level Barbarian Priest

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 9
THACO: 12
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 63
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Portable canoe, fur of warmth, incense of meditation*
BACKGROUND: Phun is a medium who communes with the spirits of nature for his tribe. They tell him when to plant and harvest, when to begin and end the hunt, how to appease the gods in times of famine, and so forth. He is capable of assuming the form of a deer at will, and he frequently runs with a herd in order to learn news of the surrounding lands.

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Delynn Rosabell

4th-level Warrior

RACE: Elf
ARMOR CLASS: 5
THACO: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 72
ALIGNMENT: Lawful neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Elven chain mail shirt*
BACKGROUND: Delynn is a mercenary soldier. Orphaned when she was an infant, Delynn was raised by a clan of war-loving humans that slew her people. When she grew old enough to question her identity, she returned to the elves and found that she could not identify with them, either. All she had was the skill of making war with which she'd been raised, so she set out alone, seeking fortune in battle.

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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Aruthir

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Darwell Tectite

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Chobin "the Punkster"

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Lady Wendolyn of Gaunt

Forgotten Realms Trading Cards

Hm-boye

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Jastus

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Delynn Rosabell

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Phun Ach-mana Phun

Forgotten Realms Trading Cards

Reptilla Half-elven

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Best of DRAGON® Adventures?

Every adventure [in DUNGEON Magazine] has been a pleasure to read (and as a DM, I find the modules well-organized for maximum playability). My players enjoyed kicking the stuffing out of the hobgoblins in "The Inheritance" (issue #26) and getting the stuffing kicked out of them by the Bolg Mor in "The Cauldron of Plenty" (issue #21). I modified Mr. Walsh's adventure slightly so that the characters arrived while the Bolg Mor was entertaining a shamefully hideous ogress. I thought "Visitors from Above" was a good introduction to the SPELLJAMMER™ multiverse (it made me blow $28 on the game), while "Ex Libris" still has me in awe (Randy Maxwell has come a long way since "White Death" and "The Ghostship Gambit"; his latest work is absolutely remarkable).

One thing I'd really like to see is a Best of DRAGON® Adventures featuring 4-6 of the best modules published in that magazine. Perhaps you could ask your subscribers which adventures they'd like to see. Myself, I like Roger Moore's "The Dancing Hut" and "Valley of the Earth Mother" (which fits well into my Moonshae campaign). Of course, I already know your position on reprinting old adventures.

Chris Perkins
Georgetown, Ontario

Adventures Wanted

I have been playing the AD&D® game for about eight years, the last three of which I have been a DM, and let me tell you that your magazine is a Dungeon Master's salvation! I am an engineer at a large chemical company based in Canada and the U.S. Consequently, I'm not always able to thoroughly prepare for a night of gaming. This is where DUNGEON® Adventures helps me the most. The modules that you present are always well organized and have story lines that are easy to follow and even easier to play. I would like to congratulate you and all your published writers for a job well done!

I am very glad to see that you are publishing more modules that are based in your various campaign settings, be it the FORGOTTEN REALMS®, GREYHAWK®, SPELLJAMMER™, or DRAGONLANCE® campaigns. I find that these modules are not only easier to fit into an ongoing campaign, but that they also make up for the lack of new and exciting modules currently missing from the shelves of bookstores and hobby shops everywhere. TSR has been so busy designing new campaign worlds for its boxed set product lines that it seems to have forgotten about the real reason people play the AD&D game: ADVENTURE! Everywhere you look there are new campaign settings and numerous supplements and accessories to go along with them, but there are few actual modules.

Take the RAVENLOFT™ and *Ruins of Undermountain* boxed sets, for examples. There are few RAVENLOFT modules currently on the market, and none for the *Ruins of Undermountain* boxed set (but there is an accessory concerning the drow and their customs that is ready to hit the market soon). I also saw an advertisement for the new DARK SUN™ campaign setting (another boxed set). Come on, guys! If I am going to spend my hard-earned money on AD&D products, I want to spend it on modules that can be shared with my players, not on accessories or boxed sets that the game can be played without.

Alan Anderson
N. Chelmsford, Massachusetts

Here's a definite vote for more RAVENLOFT™ modules. This game world has perked my interest like no other. The issue that had the RAVENLOFT adventure about Ebonbane (issue #31) was one of my favorites.

I must say that I like the seemingly endless potential that the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting offers. Seeing more modules on places within the Forgotten Realms that fill up empty spaces would be a big plus. Right now the Anauroch desert seems to be a huge barrier in the progression of a lot of modules. I'd like to see modules which connect cities on the border or near the desert to places in the desert. Also, places like Battle of the Bones, Myth Drannor, Zhentil Keep, Mulmaster, and the Citadel of the Raven should be expanded to include adventuring sites.

Jeff Cornell
No address given

One At A Time

I own both the SPELLJAMMER and RAVENLOFT boxed sets and have enjoyed the adventures you have published for these campaign settings. I don't use the DRAGONLANCE world but would still be interested in reading adventures for Krynn (including Taladas) as well as modules set in the Hordelands, Kara-Tur, and Maztica.

Personally, I feel that one module from one of these settings every issue is about right, with the bulk of the magazine still being given over to "standard" AD&D adventures. Modules set in the central areas of the Realms or the World of Greyhawk are usually no harder to place in a DM's own campaign than many generic adventures. The modules I find least useful are those set in jungles or deserts, as my campaign is set in a temperate area. However, I wonder how many of your readers buy the magazine and use every adventure? As long as the modules are interesting to read, I still enjoy them, even if I can't find a place for them in my campaign.

Richard Green
London, England

No Difference?

Regarding the debate between generic and world-specific adventures, I have only one thing to say: "What's the difference?" Adventures set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS or GREYHAWK settings are no more difficult to adapt than those set in a DM's own campaign world. In fact, with the greater volume of published material as background, world-specific adventures should be easier to integrate into an ongoing campaign. Worlds like DRAGONLANCE, RAVENLOFT, SPELLJAMMER, or DARK SUN may be harder to integrate than others. But some worlds, like the FORGOTTEN REALMS, are as generic as any from another DM.

Many DMs shy away at the merest mention of using adventures for a published campaign. However, with a closer look they would see that these are as good or better than many of the adventures for generic worlds. Even if an adventure is too involved in local politics for their liking, these DMs could use the story line, or at least gain inspiration from it.

Steven Marty
Cambridge, Minnesota

Ω

THE *LADY ROSE*

BY STEVEN KURTZ

This "lady" is no delicate flower.

Artwork by Bob Klasnich

Steve is still *a 23-year-old graduate student studying orthopaedic biomechanics at Cornell University. He dedicates this adventure to his inspiration for the Dama Rosa (Hi, Mom!).*

"The *Lady Rose*" is an AD&D® adventure for 5-7 neutral- and good-aligned player characters of 8th-11th level (about 55 total levels). The adventure can be completed by resourceful fighters and rogues, although the presence of spell-casting PCs will greatly improve the party's chance of survival. Since there is a waterborne segment to this adventure, the swimming nonweapon proficiency will be helpful to the PCs. This module can be used independently or can easily be incorporated into the sea coast of an existing campaign.

In this adventure the players and their PCs are introduced to a ship from a foreign, more technically advanced human civilization. The adventure is cast in a Spanish/Castillian style, but if the DM has a preference for another language, the ship can just as easily be called the *Dame Rose* or the *Doña Rosa.*

Adventure Background

The port of Sandbar is a growing community with a population of about 2,000 humans and elves. When the PCs arrive at Sandbar, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> Lying on the shores of the Ebony Sea at the mouth of the Silver Stream River, Sandbar thrives on riverborne and coastal trade. Raw materials like lumber, marble, cotton, wool, and iron ore arrive on barges from upriver, to be worked or refined by skilled elven craftsman into products ranging from handsome furniture and sculpture to sturdy armor and weapons. The crafts of Sandbar, carried by ship for sale at larger ports, have earned an excellent reputation for their beauty and durability.
>
> Lured by tales of fine elven craftsmanship and even finer elven wine, your party has been traveling for a week to reach this small port.

Upon their arrival, the PCs notice that the stout wooden stockade surrounding the town has recently burned down in sections facing the sea. The town appears to be recovering from a large fire. Only blackened timber

frames lean like shadows where many houses and stores in Sandbar once stood. The smell of wet ashes hangs heavily in the air at the open town gate, which somehow survived the recent conflagration.

The party is approached by a squad of four men-at-arms and their sergeant, who asks the reason for their visit and the expected length of their stay. Sergeant Alroy admits that the town was attacked two days ago by a mysterious black pirate ship. In the fire resulting from the pirates' onslaught of *fireballs* and exploding projectiles, much of the town was destroyed, including all four reputable taverns near the seaward gate.

Alroy, a stout and graying human in his late forties, suggests that the PCs travel the road upriver for six miles to Elfbridge, the location of the nearest decent tavern and the home of the lord of the region, Baron Leonardo Val-Loch. If the PCs decide to tarry at Sandbar, they discover its inhabitants to be in a state of shock over the sudden and recent loss of life and property during the fire. Most of the citizens are still too preoccupied to provide any more useful information than Sergeant Alroy.

The trip to Elfbridge is a pleasant one, leading the party past orchards and vineyards well-tended by elven druids. The town itself is a small fishing and farming community consisting of perhaps 50 cottages spread out near the Silver Steam River. There are a small tavern (The Golden Fields) and a good alehouse (The Sign of the Frosty Mug) in town, but the principle attraction is Caer Val-Loch, a castle on a small hill overlooking the hamlet.

Still cautious after the destructive raid, the baron has been scrying his officers in Sandbar from his castle. In fact, he noticed the PCs' conversation with Sergeant Alroy and has been expecting their arrival at Elfbridge. Soon after their arrival, the PCs receive invitations to the castle signed by Baron Leonardo.

At the entrance to the castle, they are greeted by Hogan, the baron's steward, and ushered into the fortification. Baron Leonardo welcomes the party in his great hall and invite them to join him at dinner. After a sumptuous feast of venison, fruit, and delicate wine, the gracious baron suddenly grows serious, clears his voice, and addresses the PCs.

> "Two days ago, a tall black warship of alien design sailed into the port of Sandbar. Without provocation, the ship rained a hail of destructive magic and incendiary missiles on the town, breaching its defenses and plunging it into chaos. During the confusion, a landing party from the ship entered the town, dispatched what was left of the town garrison, and started looting.
>
> "News of the attack did not reach me until hours later, when some of the refugees from Sandbar began arriving here. By the time I flew to Sandbar, the ship was five miles out to sea, and the town was ablaze. After summoning a driving rain to quench the fires, I surveyed the damage done to my town and my people. Thirty of my best soldiers were slain, along with 50 innocent townspeople. Another 25 of Sandbar's citizens—all of them young elves—are still missing, and I have a sinking feeling that they were abducted by the pirates, though for what dire reason I dare not imagine. I conjured a storm to cripple their vessel and prevent their escape.
>
> "I have learned through divinations that the ship has pulled into port for repairs some eighty miles north of here, in a small town called Gorneck. However, after the surprise attack at Sandbar, my small barony lacks the military resources to deal with the scoundrels. You appear to be an honest and honorable group of adventurers. I would like to commission you to seek out this ship at Gorneck and rescue my citizens from these ravening pirates!"

Leonardo, Baron of Val-Loch: AL NG; AC 2; MV 12; M13; hp 53; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; I 18, W 15, C 16, Ch 14; ML 14; *bracers of defense AC4, cloak of protection +2, carpet of flying, ring of wizardry* (doubles first- and second-level spells), *ring of spell turning, gem of seeing, wand of fire* (30 charges). The DM may choose the Baron's spell selection as necessary.

The baron offers a generous 250 gp reward for each citizen returned safely to Sandbar, and urges the PCs to depart at once. Baron Leonardo will also provide rations and quick steeds for the party if they do not already have their own. The baron does not advise waterborne travel as the coastal waters can be treacherous, and there is a perfectly good road available.

The two days of hard riding up the coast to Gorneck are uneventful and pass quickly.

For the Dungeon Master

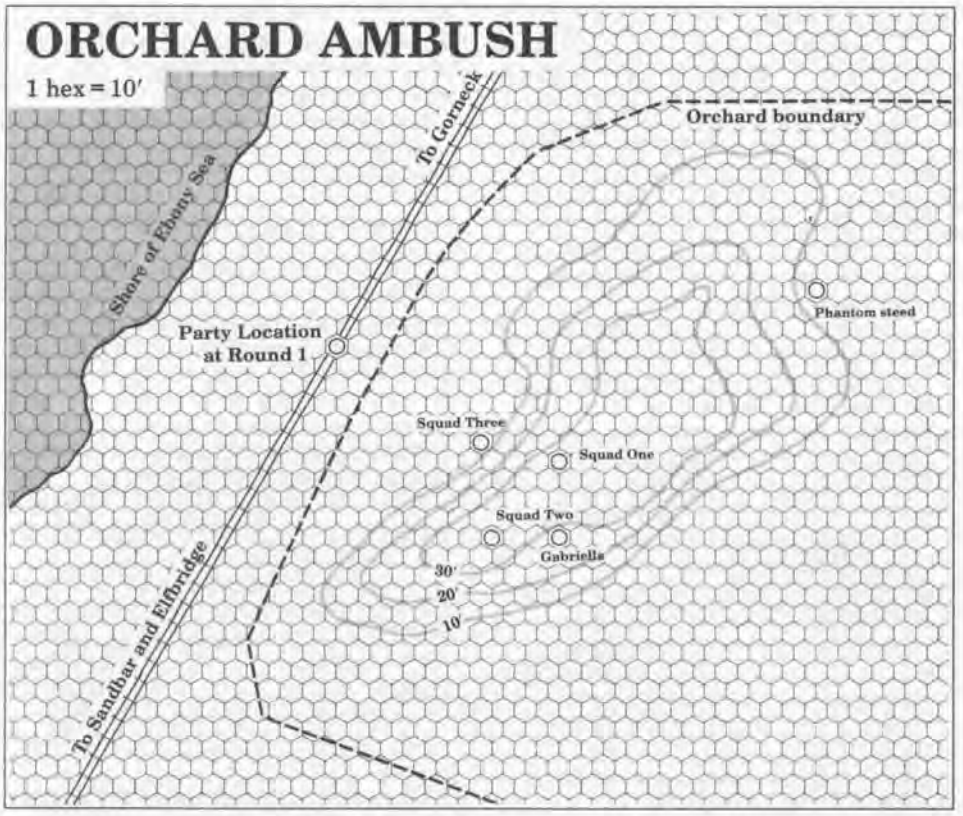
The Barony of Val-Loch has been the victim of "explorers" from Talangrán, a distant naval empire. Unless the DM has already chiseled in stone every detail of the PCs' homeworld, Talangrán can be just across the Ebony Sea or as far away as the DM cares to place it.

While they may appear to be brutal pirates from the PCs' perspective, most of those aboard the *Dama Rosa* consider themselves to be disciplined soldiers of the Talangrán Imperial Navy.

Alexa, the captain of the *Dama Rosa* has been commissioned by the emperor of Talangrán to sail beyond the confining waters near their home and explore the foreign waterways of the planet. The *Dama Rosa* has been sent abroad for intellectual, political, and economic reasons.

First of all, the emperor of Talangrán is a sage, and the compilation of resources like maps and charts of other countries and oceans will be an asset to the national archives. Secondly, the *Dama Rosa* has been deployed to judge the military strength and technological level of foreign countries. Talangrán is primarily a naval power, and the emperor wants the *Dama Rosa* to explore the world for any possible rivals. Finally, the *Dama Rosa* has been sent to gather the riches of the world for the pleasure of the emperor, and most important, to seek a new source of slaves for the empire.

The Talangrán Empire is an ancient power, with a language, culture, and legal system over 2,000 years old. The core of the society and economic system has always been based on slave labor. In Talangrán, slavery is considered neither good nor evil; it simply exists. It has always existed in the past; it will continue to exist in the future. The only good or evil (with respect to slavery) in Talangrán society is defined by how a master treats his slaves. In the household of a lawful-good noble, the slaves are treated more like loved servants. A few Talangrán nobles have been known to free their slaves after a short period



of service. Only the wealthiest of nobles can afford to be so generous, however, and such benevolence is generally looked upon with thinly veiled contempt in the upper circles of Talangrán society.

In Talangrán, it is universally recognized that elves make the best slaves, if they are captured when they are young. Once treated with a special medicine named Vidate, which makes them forget their former free existence, elves can be trained to become the most beautiful and faithful of servants. An elven slave can be expected to serve a family for many generations, and acquiring an elven slave is considered the ultimate investment for a Talangrán noble (for who else could afford the astronomical price elven slaves command on the auctioning block?).

All of the elves in Talangrán were captured and sold into slavery many centuries ago. The breeding of elven slaves has been tried on numerous occasions, without any success. In addition to the low birthrate of elves, several noted Talangrán researchers have been able to show that the prolonged use of Vidate can significantly lower fertility. In fact, Vidate renders elves permanently sterile. Given the empire's exhausted supply of elves, the *Dama Rosa* has been sent to discover a new source of slaves.

Captain Alexa has been at sea for over a year, exploring and charting its waters and islands. She discovered Sandbar totally by chance, and her wizard executive officer, Samostro, informed her that the town was held by humans with poorly defended elven slaves. What luck! Alexa ordered the storming of the port and the capture of two dozen young elves for the palace of the emperor. But as they sailed away from the burning town, the *Dama Rosa* was hit by a ferocious gale and a hail storm that tattered her sails and rigging.

Using magical scrolls gathered at his keep, Baron Leonardo had cast *improved invisibility* (on himself and his *flying carpet*) and *teleported* to the shore, where he could see the fleeing *Dama Rosa*, a vessel unlike any he had ever seen in his centuries-long life. He caught up to the ship on his carpet and positioned himself 100' above the *Dama Rosa*. He then spent the next two turns casting two *control weather* spells from the scrolls and flew home as quickly as possible.

When the storm finally abated 12 hours later, the *Dama Rosa* had been blown far to the north and effectively crippled. The ship limped into port at Gorneck the next day to make repairs to her sails.

By the time the party arrives at Gorneck, the *Dama Rosa* will have been in port for two days. Those sailors lost in the storm have been mourned by the surviving crew, and repairs are almost finished. Supplies have been purchased, and a strong patrol has been sent inland to set up a welcoming party for any visitors coming from Sandbar.

Encounter Key

A. Orchard Ambush. Alexa immediately recognized the magical nature of the winds that crippled her ship, although her spell-casting officers proved unable to dispel the effects. Expecting further reprisals from Sandbar, the captain dispatched two lieutenants and a squad of her toughest marines to engage anyone traveling toward Gorneck from the south. The squad consists of the following officers and soldiers:

Markov, first lieutenant: AL LE; AC −1; MV 12; F8; hp 68; THAC0 13; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/44 (+1 to hit, +3 damage), D 15, C 15; ML 16; XP 3,000; *plate mail +1, shield +1, long sword +1.*

A bullish and evil man, Markov enforces the captain's will with brutal efficiency as the *Dama Rosa*'s highest-ranking lieutenant. Markov is greatly feared by all the officers and marines. They follow his orders immediately, since the lieutenant has no qualms about killing those who question his decisions. Although he would never admit it, he fears the magical powers of his subordinate, Gabrielle.

Gabrielle, lieutenant: AL N; AC −1 (*armor* spell, *invisibility* from ring), 3 (when visible); MV 12; W8; hp 27; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; I 16, D 17, Ch 15; ML 16; XP 3,000; *dagger +1.*

Gabrielle is a specialized wizard, a transmuter. She gains a +1 bonus on personal saves vs. alteration spells; opponents save at −1 vs. alteration spells cast by her. Today, Gabrielle has already cast the following spells: *armor, invisibility* (cast on her familiar), *haste*

(cast on Fletch), *phantom steed, protection from normal missiles, massmorph* (cast on the ambush squad), and *stoneskin* (cast on herself). She still has the following spells memorized: *burning hands* (×2), *enlarge, shocking grasp, darkness 15' radius, fog cloud, strength, fireball, polymorph other.* Her magical items include a *ring of invisibility,* a *dagger +1,* and a potion of *extra-healing.* Gabrielle's lifetime companion is her familiar, Blanche.

Blanche, albino falcon: INT semi; AL N; AC 3 (currently *invisible*); MV fly 36 (B); HD 1−1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 3; Dmg 1/1/1; SA +2 to hit and damage when diving; SD never surprised; SZ S; ML 9; XP 65; MC (Hawk, small).

Warded by an *invisibility* spell cast by her mistress, Blanche has been patrolling the skies, searching the lands below for any sign of a war party coming from Sandbar. Because of her familiar's diligent scouting, Gabrielle is able to set up an ambush directly in the path of the PCs, even if the PCs stray off the road and attempt to approach Gorneck from a different direction.

Orch, sergeant: AL LN; AC −1; MV 6; F3; hp 26; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 17 (+1 to hit, +1 damage), D 16; ML 15; XP 175; plate mail, shield, long sword (specialized).

Orch is surly and competitive, quick to lead his squad into melee and prove his strength on the field of battle. He will fight to the death unless given orders to retreat or surrender.

Fletch, sergeant: AL LN; AC −1; MV 12 (*hasted*); F3; hp 23; THAC0 18 (16 with bow); #AT 4 (bow), 2 (cutlass); Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 18; ML 15; XP 650; plate mail, short bow (specialized), cutlass, two quivers (two dozen sheaf arrows per quiver), eight poisoned sheaf arrows (save vs. poison at +2 or sleep for 1-4 turns), four *sheaf arrows +1.*

Fletch is responsible for training the marines in the use of the short bow. She is always close to the wizard Gabrielle, who is her friend and confidante. The warrior's black braided hair has only recently begun to show gray highlights, brought on by her willingness to be frequently *hasted.* While under the effects of that spell, her initiative rolls have a −2 bonus. Compounded by her incredible agility, she has a total of −5 on her initiative rolls.

Pipper, sergeant: AL LN; AC 2; MV 6; F3; hp 34; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/56 (+2 to hit, +3 damage), C 17; ML 15; XP 120; plate mail, shield, cutlass.

Pipper's reputation for toughness began when another sergeant made a wry comment about Pipper's height (or rather, his lack of it). Pipper rearranged the other sergeant's face and then stood up to Captain Alexa's 20 lashes for disorderly conduct. He was seen doing pushups the next morning as if nothing had happened. No one has joked about the diminutive sergeant's height since.

Marines (30): AL LN; AC 5; MV 9; F1; hp 10 (×5), 9 (×5), 8 (×6), 7 (×4), 6 (×10); THAC0 19 (see below); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; XP 65; chain mail, short bow, cutlass, dagger.

These battle-hardened troops are superbly trained in melee and missile combat. Because of their training, they receive +1 on their attack and damage rolls. If ordered by their officers or sergeants, they will fight to the death. Ten marines are assigned to each sergeant.

Under Gabrielle's advice and the scouting reports of her familiar, Markov has decided to set up an elaborate ambush for the PCs near an orchard on a hill overlooking the sea. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> Your journey from Sandbar has been exhausting. After pushing your horses to the brink of collapse for the past two days, you figure that you are less than five miles from Gorneck, your destination. Traveling on a road along the sea, you passed many small hills on your trip north. Many of the hills were covered with apple orchards; two hills were topped by graveyards.

At one of the many orchards on the road to Gorneck, Gabrielle has used a *massmorph* spell to turn all of the company into apple trees. If a wizard in the PC party is a transmuter or has the *massmorph* spell in his repertoire, there is a 5% chance per level that he will notice something irregular about the orchard's trees (this occurs five yards away for every point of the wizard's intelligence). Something about the orchard is not quite right, although the wizard just can't put his finger on it.

When the party rides within 50 yards of the orchard on the hill top, Gabrielle drops the *massmorph* spell and springs the trap.

> You are approaching yet another hill crowned with an orchard when the apple trees shimmer in the light of the setting sun and assume the shapes of soldiers!

The company is deployed according to the Orchard Ambush map. Worked out well in advance, the orders of the company are to kill any war party's mounts; to slay warriors and rogues; and to drug, capture, or subdue any spell-casters. Alexa wants to question any captured wizards or priests personally, in order to find out about other powerful spell-casters in the region (including Baron Leonardo). If the PCs are riding horses given to them by the baron, assume that their mounts have the following statistics:

Riding horse: INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 10 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-2/1-2; ML 7; MC. These mounts have been trained by the baron to be unafraid of magic. They are not warhorses, however, and need to make a morale check if wounded in combat.

The company has been organized into three squads. Squad One, commanded by Sergeant Fletch, is composed of 10 marines with short bows, arrows nocked. Squad Two comprises 10 more archers and is commanded by Sergeant Pipper and First Lieutenant Markov. The remaining 10 marines make up Squad Three. They are commanded by Sergeant Orch, and all have their cutlasses at the ready.

During the fighting, the wizard Gabrielle remains concealed using her *ring of invisibility.* She works independently, relaying information from her airborne familiar to Markov, and casting defensive spells when necessary. The tactics of the company are as follows:

Round 1: Gabrielle drops the *massmorph* spell when the party approaches within 50 yards of the orchard. Check for the PCs' surprise, using a −2 penalty (the party is surprised on a 1-5 on 1d10). If the party is surprised, Squads One and Two let loose two volleys of arrows (40 arrows from marines, four from Fletch, two from Orch, two from Markov) at the PCs' mounts.

Round 2: Fletch fires four poisoned arrows at obvious spell-casters in the party (remember her −5 bonus to initiative). Squads One and Two let loose two volleys of arrows (40 arrows from marines, two from Orch, two from Markov)

at the PCs' mounts first, then at warrior or rogue PCs. Squad Three moves down the hill to engage the PCs hand to hand. Gabrielle casts a *strength* spell on Markov.

Round 3: Fletch fires her last four poisoned arrows at obvious spell-casters in the party. Squads One and Two hold fire unless the PCs break through Squad Three and attempt to climb the hill. In this case, they let loose two volleys of arrows (40 arrows from marines, two from Orch, two from Markov) at anyone approaching. Squad Three continues fighting until slain. Gabrielle casts an *enlarge* spell on Markov.

Round 4: Fletch fires her four *arrows +1*. The marines in Squad Two drop their bows and draw their cutlasses, advancing on the PCs. Markov, now under the effect of *enlarge* and *strength* spells, charges into melee. Squad One remains on the hill with Gabrielle and holds fire unless PCs break through Squads Two and Three. If this happens, they let loose two volleys of arrows (20 arrows from marines) at anyone approaching.

Round 5 and on: Fletch fires four arrows each round until her supply of four dozen arrows is exhausted (in 12 rounds). The marines and sergeants in Squads Two and Three engage the PCs to the death. Markov will fight until he has sustained 40 hp damage, then attempt to withdraw to the hilltop.

If the fighting appears to be going badly for the troops, or if Markov is badly wounded, Gabrielle covers the hilltop with a *fog cloud* spell. She orders the speedy withdrawal of Squad One (including herself and Fletch) in order to report the incident to the captain. Under no circumstances will Gabrielle offer her potion of *extra-healing* to Markov, no matter how badly wounded he may be. Gabrielle has been bullied unmercifully by her superior and cannot wait for him to die in the line of duty, so that she can be elevated to his rank. If Gabrielle has the chance to escape without Markov, she will withdraw, leaving him to certain death or capture by the PCs.

If her escape is harried or she is personally threatened, Gabrielle finally resorts to her *fireball* spell (against a group, even if it includes Markov) or her *polymorph other* spell (against a single opponent). She then uses her ring to become *invisible* again in the next round. Using Blanche to keep tabs on the location of the PCs at all times, Gabrielle mounts her *phantom steed* and returns to the *Dama Rosa* to inform the captain of the PCs' imminent arrival. Squad One will have to march home on foot, which will take two hours.

None of the soldiers or officers have any kind of monetary treasure; their valuables are stored aboard the *Dama Rosa*. Close inspection of the soldier's gear reveals it to be of strange design. Their headgear does not consist of barrel helms, but rather basinets (a rounded steel helmet with a raised steel ridge), some sporting white plumes. The breast plates of Markov and the sergeants bear inscriptions in a foreign language. The stitching in the cloth and leather articles appears to have been made with astonishing precision—all of the stitches are exactly the same distance apart, even in the common soldier's garb (in Talangrán, water wheels are used to power machines and looms to do sewing and weaving).

If any of the company are captured, the PCs discover that their newly acquired prisoners cannot speak Common or any other languages of the PCs' home continent. If communication is magically established, 75% of the soldiers give general information about their homeland, while the sergeants and Markov remain tightlipped.

Only the captain and her executive officer know about the full orders of the *Dama Rosa*. The crew has been told that their mission is to explore and record new lands for their emperor. Captured soldiers express the utmost respect for their captain, praising her maritime and military skills and referring to her with a mixture of respect and awe as "La Fabulosa." They know that the *Dama Rosa* is due to set sail for home the following morning. The PCs will have to move quickly in order to catch the ship in port at Gorneck, five miles away.

The DM is encouraged to supply the PCs with vague hints from the adventure background information. Clues about the *Dama Rosa*'s military complement and armaments should be kept as sketchy as possible (unless the PCs have managed to capture and *charm* an officer!).

B. Gorneck. The inhabitants of this small port have been living in a state of mounting fear ever since the strangers arrived in their warship with tattered sails. Although the foreigners have treated them with respect and paid for ale and services with good gold, the sight of so many armed warriors in their peaceful community has made many citizens uneasy. Fortunately, there are no adolescent elves living in Gorneck, or the town would probably have met the same fate as Sandbar.

The town appears to be devoid of activity. People stay at home, waiting with growing anxiety for the great ship to weigh anchor and sail away. The inns and taverns of the town are open but have few customers. No one wants to speak about the ship or even to acknowledge its existence. If the PCs spread wealth around the sparse tavern-goers, they can learn that the ship arrived two days ago and has been making repairs to her sails and rigging ever since.

If the PCs somehow managed to avoid or completely destroy the ambush party at the orchard (area A), they will note the presence of a large number of soldiers near a tavern called The Inn of the Ebon Petal. The inn sits on the docks, and one can see the dark silhouette of the *Dama Rosa* not 300 yards off shore. The men inside are on shore leave from the *Dama Rosa*, getting their last taste of land fare before their ship casts off at dawn tomorrow. The shore leave party includes the following men:

Sailors (10): AL N; AC 9; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 4-6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; D 15; ML 12; XP 15; knives.

These nimble seamen wear no armor but will fight with their knives to defend themselves. Four are sitting in a corner playing a strange card game (with 17 sp for stakes), while six are sitting at the bar, drinking heavily and singing (rather badly) a song in an incomprehensible language. Each sailor carries 2-16 sp in foreign coins.

Arnold and **Megard,** sergeants: AL LN; AC 3; MV 6; F3; hp 24, 19; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 18 (+1 to hit, +2 damage); ML 14; XP 120; plate mail, cutlass.

These two brawny men sit opposite each other, arm wrestling at a table by the door. Arnold and Megard are surrounded by a crowd of their soldiers, who place wagers and chant encouragement to their squad leaders. In addition to their armor and weapons, each of the sergeants carries 21-40 gp and 101-200 sp.

Marines (20): AL LN; AC 5; MV 9; F1; hp 7-10; THAC0 19 (see below); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 13; XP 35; chain mail, cutlass, dagger, 21-40 sp. These marines and their leaders gain +1 to hit and damage for their intensive training.

If Gabrielle fled the orchard ambush on her *phantom steed*, the soldiers in the inn have been withdrawn to the *Dama Rosa*, and the Inn of the Ebon Petal is as empty as the rest of the taverns in town. The soldiers and sailors previously at the inn will be encountered instead at area 6 of the ship, while any soldiers who survived the ambush with only minor wounds will be encountered again at area 4.

The DM should keep careful track of time, starting with the arrival of the PCs in Gorneck, since the *Dama Rosa* will sail at dawn. Unless Gabrielle has been slain, her invisible hawk familiar will be patrolling the skies, searching for the PCs until the sun sets. At night, this form of surveillance is useless, but the ship will be on battle alert as the final preparations for the voyage home are being made.

When the PCs approach Gorneck harbor, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> You can finally see the rumored pirate ship for yourself. Anchored in the harbor about 300 yards from shore, the black hull encrusted with gold sculptures rises majestically above the water.
>
> The ship is much taller than other vessels you have seen, with three masts and perhaps four decks above the waterline. A crow's nest crowns each mast, although the one atop the mainmast appears to be the largest of the three. A raised forecastle and aftcastle dominate the topdecks, with another structure built at the stern on top of the aftcastle.
>
> The ship is huge, over 100′ long, with a sleek prow. Unlike many ships you have seen, the hull is pierced with numerous hatches, some of them now open, as low as 6′ or 7′ above the waterline. A small structure protrudes from each side of the ship, near the stern, about 6′ above water level. The purpose of these gold-encrusted structures is unclear. Finally, a row of four large open windows can be seen at the stern of the ship, perhaps 14′ above the waterline. Below the windows, a wide red-painted band proclaims what you assume to be the name of the ship in an unrecognizable alphabet.
>
> Night is falling, but the ship gleams with the illumination of magical light. The top decks are alive with activity. As many as 40 or 50 men and about a half-dozen armored giants are either standing guard or fixing the rigging and sails of the mainmast; the sails and rigging of the foremast have already been repaired. It doesn't take an experienced eye to tell that the ship will be ready to sail quite soon, perhaps by morning.

If the party has some magical means to decipher foreign writing, they can read the name of the ship: *Dama Rosa*, or in Common, *Lady Rose*. No more detailed information can be gained about the ship from this distance. Information gathering should be left entirely to the PCs with as little encouragement from the DM as possible. It should be an easy matter for the PCs to rent (or buy) a small fishing boat or rowboat (use the prices in the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*). As long as the PCs pay well, no questions will be asked about why they want to acquire aquatic transportation.

The *Dama Rosa*

The *Dama Rosa* is the flagship of the Talangrán Imperial Navy, a maritime power more technologically advanced than the PCs' culture. The naval architects of Talangrán have discovered how to construct ship hulls to include numerous hatches for armaments, similar to fighting ships of the 17th and early 18th centuries on Earth.

The most important distinction between the *Dama Rosa* and an AD&D galleon is its armaments. Because galleons are not structurally sound enough to have many hatches, their armaments are carried on the top decks. This method of construction restricts these ships to carrying a few ballistas and one or two catapults at most. In naval encounters between galleons, the tactics of both captains are to close the distance, grapple, and board; the victor has the best fighters and spell-casters. For warfare between 14th-15th century galleons (supposedly the most developed warships in an AD&D campaign), the role of missile weapons was not a deciding factor.

Talangrán has designed new weapons (new to the PCs, at least) for use aboard ships. The first of these weapons is a compact, composite ballista. Half the size of its 14th-15th century counterpart (roughly 5′ long and 4′ wide) and delivering the same damage at about the same range, the Talangrán ballista comes in two forms: anti-ship and anti-personnel. The *Dama Rosa* has 30 of the first type and 15 of the second type of ballista on board, with spare parts in the hold to repair them all.

In addition, the military engineers and alchemists of Talangrán have developed a type of naphtha or Greek fire projectile that resembles *mage shot* (described in DRAGON® Magazine #159, "Bazaar of the Bizarre," by Steven E. Schend). This type of projectile resembles a small, lusterless black orb 5″ in diameter and weighing approximately 4 lbs. A fuse protrudes, like a stubby black hair, from a rubber stopper plugging a hole in the orb. If the plug and fuse are removed (this will take some prying with a dagger), the

orb is found to be hollow but completely filled with a viscous golden fluid. This liquid, naphtha, is sticky and extremely flammable (it will even burn underwater!).

The black orb is made from an epoxy-like substance, the sap of the Jupa tree that grows only in Talangrán. As a result, the orb is lightweight and will shatter only with considerable impact (dropping or throwing is not sufficient).

Mage shot is designed to be used with a ballista, not as a hand grenade. When properly ignited and fired, *mage shot* explodes on impact, delivering 2-4 points of structural damage to a ship and 4-24 hp fire damage to everyone within a 10′ radius (save vs. petrification for half damage). The naphtha continues to burn for four rounds, inflicting one point of structural damage to the ship and 1-6 hp damage to each creature in range until extinguished. For each round the flame is left uncontrolled, there is a cumulative 10% chance the fire will spread and inflict an additional point of structural damage to the ship. The judicious use of this weapon has made the Talangrán navy widely respected and feared.

In addition to her deadly ballistas, the *Dama Rosa* also carries three specialized catapults, called jettisons. These devices fire clouds of shrapnel—sharp rocks, jagged glass, pieces of iron—at the decks of enemy vessels at close range. Like the anti-personnel ballistas, they inflict no damage to ships. The statistics of these new weapons are summarized in the "Armaments of the *Dama Rosa*" sidebar.

As if all of these armaments were not enough to assure the *Dama Rosa*'s supremacy in any naval encounter, the wizards of Talangrán installed formidable magical defenses in the ship itself. First of all, the *Dama Rosa* has been magically fireproofed. Everything on board saves vs. fire at a +4 bonus, for half or no damage. Even magical fire does not spread on board, and burns out within a single round. Due to the considerable enchantments laid on the ship, everything on board saves against all other attack forms with a +2 bonus, for half or no damage.

The keel of the ship is lined with lead on the inside (for ballast), and the exterior hull (starting 5′ above the waterline) is covered with enchanted copper plating. This plating boosts the ship's armor class to 5 and greatly improves her handling and speed. Because of these enchantments, the *Dama Rosa* has a base 5 mph cruising speed and a maximum cruising speed of 10 mph, with 95% seaworthiness (see page 126 of the AD&D 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The enchanted plating also protects the exterior hull against piercing by magical or mundane means (*disintegrate* or *passwall* spells, a piercing ram, ballista bolts, etc.). Interior bulkheads and the ship's sails and rigging are not similarly warded against such attacks, however.

The *Dama Rosa* has a complement of over 150 people, not including those sent to the apple orchard ambush. Since the officers are a capable lot and the ship's armaments are quite deadly, the PCs will probably be wiped out if they attempt a frontal assault on the moored ship. The *Dama Rosa* is most vulnerable, however, when it is anchored at night. No one can watch every square foot of railing at all times, and range weapons are useless in the dark. This is the opportune time for the PCs to attempt to board the ship.

Light Aboard the Ship

Once night falls, the *Dama Rosa* is enshrouded in *continual light* spells emanating from six open lanterns, one placed at the bow, stern, and each ladder leading up from the quarter deck (area 6). The lanterns fully illuminate the top decks, masts, and crows nests; the surface of the water within 60′ of the ship is illuminated as well.

Interior spaces are furnished with *continual light* lanterns, which are assumed to be uncovered unless stated otherwise.

Approaching by Boat, and Attempts to Parley

If the PCs row out to the *Dama Rosa* in a boat under a white flag of truce, they receive a warning shot from a ballista across their bow once they approach within 60′ of the ship. Unless the PCs stop, several arrows land on their boat. If the PCs continue to row, they are fired on by the full complement of bowmen in areas 1-4, 6, and 18. The captain sounds "general quarters," and the whole crew is at battle stations by the next round. *Mage shot* starts flying, and the PCs' small vessel becomes a flaming mass within segments.

If the PCs decide to stop and attempt to parley, a handsome man with dark hair and eyes emerges from the structure on top of the aftcastle (this is area 5, the bridge) and inquires the PCs' business in flawless Common (thanks to a *tongues* spell). Unless the PCs immediately state their interest in the fate of the elves on board, the officer dismisses them and warns that to approach the ship again will be considered an act of aggression and dealt with harshly.

Once the subject of the elves is broached, the officer introduces himself as Samostro, chief executive officer of the *Dama Rosa*, and tells the PCs that their elven slaves can be bought back from his generous captain, La Fabulosa, for a fee of 200,000 gp. The officer may haggle the price down to 175,000 gp but will drop his offer no further. Refer to area 5 for more details about the appearance and demeanor of Samostro.

From Captain Alexa's point of view, she is indeed offering the PCs a generous deal. The slaves would be worth slightly more in the court of Talangrán, but it would be difficult to ensure that all the elves survived the long journey home.

Boarding the *Dama Rosa*

Since it is unlikely that the PCs are carrying enough cash to ransom the elves, they are going to have to devise a scheme to get on board the *Dama Rosa* and rescue them. A party without spellcasters will have to be very creative to avoid being spotted by the sentries. If the PCs have access to spells (like

Armaments of the *Dama Rosa*

	Range Min/Max	Hull Dmg.	Personal Damage	ROF	Crew	THAC0
Ballista						
Anti-Personnel (15)	.25"/46"	0	3-18	1/2	1	12
Anti-Ship (30)	.25"/30"	2-4 +special	4-24 +special	1/3	2	14
Jettison (3)	3"/12"	0	2-12	1/3	3	15

silence 15' radius, invisibility, water breathing, airy water, alter self, etc.), sneaking up to the ship and getting on board should not pose too much of a problem.

The statistics of the crew of the *Dama Rosa* are given below and can be referred to when encounters are mentioned in the text.

Sailors: AL N; AC 9; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 4-6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; D 15; ML 12; XP 15; knives. These seamen wear no armor and are armed only with knives. They will fight only in extreme situations, being paid to sail the ship, not risk their lives.

Marines: AL LN; AC 7; MV 12; F1; hp 7-10; THAC0 19 (see below); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 13; XP 35; leather armor, shield, cutlass, dagger. The marines gain +1 to hit and damage for their intensive training.

The DM should read the shipboard encounter areas carefully before play. The DM is encouraged to go the library and peruse a book on warships from the 17th to early 18th centuries, to get more of a feel for the type of vessel involved, her interior spaces, and her decor. Since only a brief descriptions of each area is given, the DM should flesh out sections of the ship with more detail where desired.

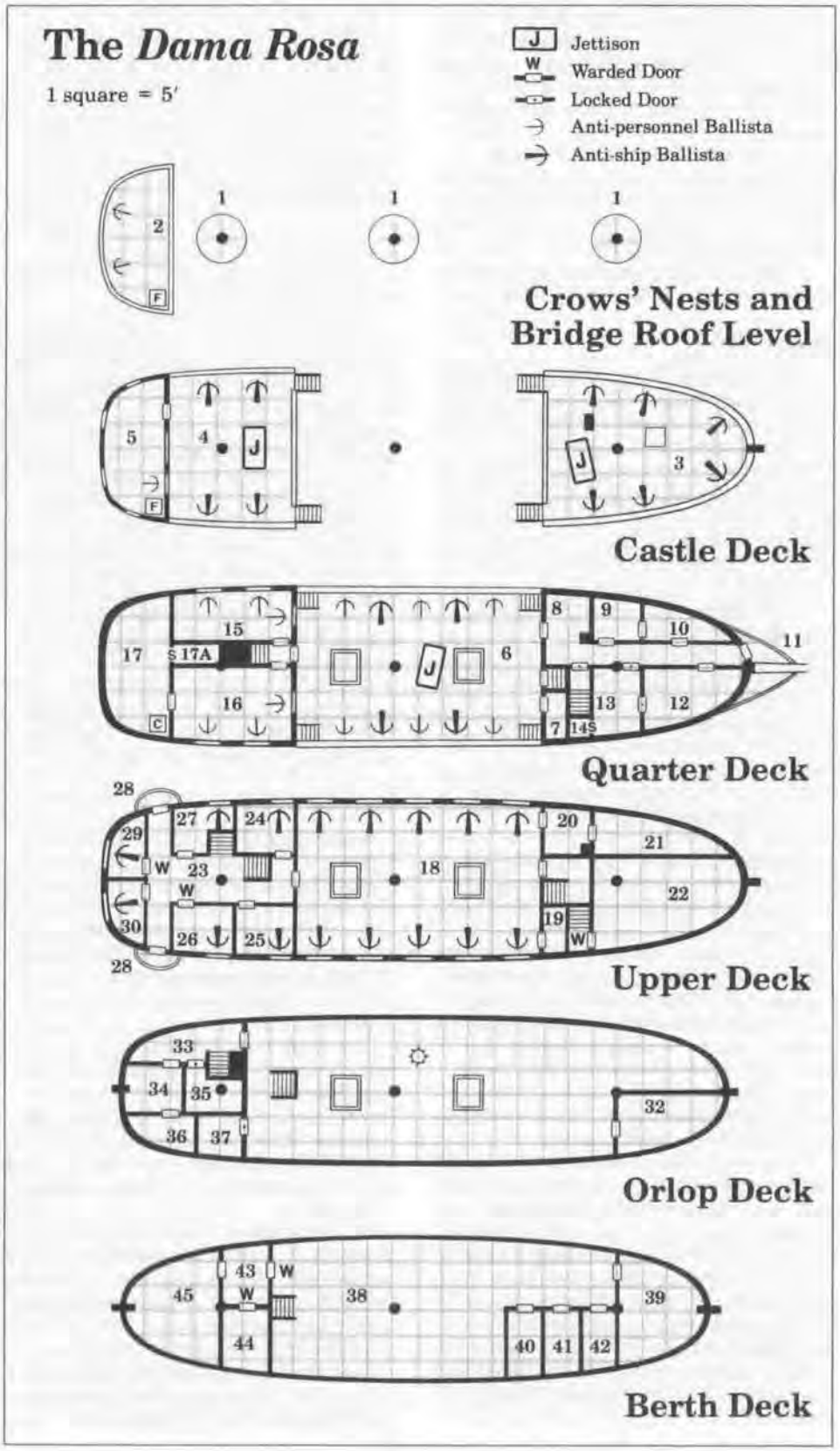
1. Crow's Nests. The three crow's nests (one atop each mast) offer a superb view of areas 2-4 and 6 below. Five marines armed with short bows man each crow's nest. They fire a volley of arrows and raise the alarm if they notice anything suspicious on the top decks.

The crow's nests also offer an excellent view of the water within 60' of the sides of the ship (thanks to the *continual light* spells), but the water near the bow, stern, and under the officers' latrines (area 28) is partially shielded from view by protruding parts of the ship.

2. Bridge Roof. Two anti-personnel ballistas are mounted atop the bridge roof, tended by a guard of five marines and Sergeant Grotto.

Grotto, sergeant: AL LN; AC 6; MV 9; F3; hp 21; THAC0 18 (10 with ballista); #AT 1 or 1/2; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; XP 175; studded leather armor, shield, cutlass.

The soldiers have been ordered to



watch the water to the stern of the ship, but their attention is far from acute. Since the aftcastle and bridge hang over the stern, the water within 10'-20' is shielded from view of the bridge roof, and the soldiers have only a 1-in-4 chance of detecting PCs who surface there after swimming to the ship underwater. PCs approaching the stern by swimming on the surface have a 3-in-4 chance of being spotted.

A trapdoor in the southern corner of the roof gives access to the bridge (area 5).

Castle Deck

3. Fore Deck. A guard of 10 marines and Sergeant Alphonse stand duty here, manning the ballistas and watching the water for approaching intruders.

Alphonse, sergeant: AL LN; AC 5; MV 9; F3; hp 19; THAC0 18 (10 with ballista); #AT 1 or 1/2 (ballista); Dmg by weapon type; D 15; ML 14; XP 175; studded leather armor, shield, cutlass.

4. Aft Deck. In addition to the armaments indicated on the map, the aft deck is covered with coils of rope and pieces of cloth. Twelve sailors are working hard to finish sewing patches in the aft sails so that the *Dama Rosa* can depart on schedule in the morning. Any marines or sergeants who took little damage in the orchard ambush (area A) will be encountered here again.

5. Bridge. The east wall of this chamber was made transparent with a *glassteel* spell at the time of the *Dama Rosa*'s creation, so the occupants of this room can easily observe areas 3 and 4. Navigational charts and equipment have been spread out on a table beneath the magical window. Voice tubes lead from this room down to the captain's stateroom (area 17) and the helm (area 34). In the south corner, trapdoors in the floor and ceiling give access to the captain's chamber and the bridge roof (area 2).

The curved wall of the room is covered with detailed star charts that have been carefully updated with the current location of planets. Most of this laborious work has been performed by Samostro, the ship's astrologer, navigator, and chief executive officer. Charming but sly, Samostro will attempt to deal with any intruders himself without having to bother Captain Alexa, who is planning the next day's course in her chambers below.

Samostro: AL N; AC 2; MV 12; W9; hp 37; THAC0 18 or 15 (with staff); #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; I 16, D 16, C 15, Ch 15; ML 10; XP 5,000. Spells: *grease, magic missile* (×2), *sleep, invisibility, mirror image, wizard lock, lightning bolt, protection from normal missiles, tongues, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, cone of cold.* Samostro wears *bracers of defense AC4* and wields a *staff of thunder and lightning* (11 charges remaining) passed along to him by his mentor before he died.

The wizard also has a scroll with five spells, all *fireball,* which he keeps on his person at all times. These spells are cast at the 9th level of experience and come in handy during ship battles. On another scroll, the wizard has *magic missile, dispel magic,* and *conjure water elemental,* all cast at 9th level of experience.

If combat erupts on deck, Samostro notifies the captain using the voice tube, then *wizard locks* the door leading to area 4. He casts *mirror image* and *protection from normal missiles* spells on himself before conjuring a water elemental using his scroll (this takes one turn).

Not particularly brave, Samostro will turn himself *invisible* and flee to area 43 if the fighting goes badly. The wizard will make his last stand there.

Quarter Deck

6. Quarter Deck. This large deck bustles with activity throughout the night. If Gabrielle has managed to warn the *Dama Rosa* of the defeat at the apple orchard, the marines, sailors and sergeants previously at the Inn of the Ebon Petal are encountered here, in addition to the soldiers mentioned below.

Toward the center of the deck, 10 sailors are busily repairing torn sails and rigging. The six anti-personnel ballistas at the rails are tended by 12 marines, while the four anti-ship ballistas (each loaded with a canister of *mage shot*) are tended by six strange giant creatures.

Standing about 9' tall, these monsters appear to be extremely muscular giants with the heads of hippopotami. Known as giff (see sidebar), these monsters are hardy mercenaries with a flair for explosions and incendiary projectiles. These creatures are the descendants of a group of shipwrecked spelljamming giff who landed in the Talangrân Empire over a century ago. Delighted by the *mage shot* in use aboard the empire's warships, they soon became a common feature of the Imperial Navy's strongest ships, working for the fee of one canister of *mage shot* per day (payable only during combat). Too large to fit inside any of Talangrân's warships, the giff have gotten used to sleeping on deck for entire journeys.

When the *Dama Rosa* was tossed by Baron Leonardo's conjured storm, five giff were thrown overboard. Heavily encumbered by their plate armor, they promptly drowned. This loss has sobered the surviving giff, but if a suitable target crosses their sights (like a rowboat full of PCs approaching the *Dama Rosa*) they will be quick to loose their canisters of *mage shot* and watch the beautiful explosions.

Giff mercenaries (5): AC 2; HD 4; hp 30, 29, 26, 23, 21; THAC0 14; XP 270; MC/SJ; cutlass (see "Giff" sidebar for complete statistics). The giff are fearless warriors and will gladly fight to the death (an honorable demise) if given the opportunity.

The small squad of giff is led by Mr. Hatchet, a robust male giff with graying tufts of bristles on his head. His prize possession is Big Bertha, an arquebus of prodigious size. This oversized weapon inflicts 1-12 hp damage if it hits; if a 12 is rolled, another 1-12 hp damage is scored, ad infinitum. Mr. Hatchet has enough smoke powder for only four more shots, though, and Big Bertha's chances of misfiring are the same as those given in the *PH*. Mr. Hatchet feels the risk is worth it, since his firearm makes a large explosion when discharged, earning him the admiration, respect, and envy of his subordinates.

Mr. Hatchet, giff lieutenant: HD 8; hp 48; THAC0 10 (13 with Big Bertha); #AT 2 (1/4 with Big Bertha); ML 16; XP 1400; battle axe, Big Bertha (see sidebar and previous giff for complete statistics).

7. Quarter Deck Armory. The walls of this closet are lined with empty weapon racks. All of the armaments normally stored here have been handed out to members of the crew. An unlocked chest on the floor contains the unspent wages of the giff: eight canisters of *mage shot.*

8. Quartermaster's Office. This small room contains records of the sup-

plies, provisions, and cargo of the *Dama Rosa*, all meticulously arranged in waterproofed books on a shelf lining the north wall. All of the requisition forms, supply orders, tally sheets, and other records are written in the language of Talangrán and will be incomprehensible to the PCs unless magical means are used to decipher them.

9. Carpenter's Shop. Any PC with carpentry nonweapon proficiency will recognize this chamber to be a carpenter's workshop. A workbench lies against the north wall beneath a rack of woodworking tools. The chamber is devoid of inhabitants or treasure.

10. Carpenter's Store. This room is used to store lumber. In the eastern corner of the room, a strange device (a carpenter will recognize this to be a lathe) radiates magic. When a piece of wood is fastened to the device and a command word is uttered, the lathe spins the wood fast enough for it to be easily shaped by a skilled carpenter into a table leg, a belaying pin, or whatever is needed. The magical lathe can be sold to a master carpenter for 250 gp.

11. Prow. This area is used as a latrine by the enlisted men of the ship. It is currently empty. The deck projects over the prow of the ship, shielding the water within 10′ of the bow from view by the guards at area 3. There is only a 1-in-4 chance that anyone climbing up from the water here will be detected by guards at area 1 or 3.

12. Rope Store. Spare twine, string, and rope of all lengths and dimensions is stored in this room, all neatly coiled in cubbyholes and shelves lining the walls. The room is devoid of inhabitants or treasure.

13. Brandy Store. The doors to this room are locked. The crew's rations include a half ounce of brandy per day (it's good for morale). The casks in this room contain enough brandy to keep the crew's spirits up for three months. The small barrels of liquor in the room can be sold for a total of 500 gp. If the brandy store is searched, there is a 2-in-6 chance that a concealed locked door will be discovered in the southwestern corner of the room.

14. Wine Cache. The door to this

Giff

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Any
FREQUENCY: Rare
ORGANIZATION: Platoon
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Day
DIET: Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE: Low (7)
TREASURE: Nil
ALIGNMENT: Lawful neutral
NO. APPEARING: 10-20 (6 in this adventure)
ARMOR CLASS: 6 (2)
MOVEMENT: 6 base
HIT DICE: 4
THAC0: 17 (14 with hand-held weapon)
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6 +7 or by weapon +7
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Head butt
SPECIAL DEFENSES: None
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 10%
SIZE: L (9′ tall)
MORALE: Elite (14)
XP VALUE: 270 or 1,400

The giff are a race of powerfully muscled hippopotami mercenaries. Typically, they hire on with various groups throughout the universe as mercenaries, bodyguards, enforcers, and general leg-breakers—and they're pretty good at it.

The basic form of a giff is humanoid, with stocky, flat, cylindrical legs and a humanoid torso, arms, legs, and fingers. The chest is broad and supports a neckless head that looks like a hippopotamus's. Giff come in colors ranging from black to gray to a rich gold, but many have colorful tattoos that leave their body a patchwork record of past jobs and victories.

Combat: The giff are military minded, and organize themselves into squads, platoons, companies, and the like. The number of giff in a platoon ranges according to the level of danger involved. Usually (75% chance) the platoon will be lead by a giff champion (8 HD), performing as the highest-ranking giff officer.

The giff pride themselves on their weapon skills, and any giff will have a number of swords, daggers, maces, and similar tools to deal with trouble-makers (i.e. anyone who displeases their employers). But their true love in weaponry is guns. Any giff will have a 20% chance for an arquebus (80% chance for a giff champion) and sufficient smoke powder for 2-8 shots. A misfiring weapon is of little matter to the giff (occasional fatalities are expected). The flash, the noise, and the damage are what most impress them.

Even unarmed, a giff is a powerful customer, as strong as a hill giant (+3 to hit, +7 on damage due to strength). In addition to his fists (1-6 +7 hp damage), the unarmed giff can also use a head butt in attacking. The top of the giff's head and snout are plated with thick chitinous plates, flexible enough to permit motion, but rigid enough to serve as a natural helmet. The giff can charge, using its head butt, for 2-12 +7 hp damage.

The giff pride themselves as mercenaries, and to that end have made ornate, elaborate suits of armor, which reduce their armor class to 2. Armor repair is a major hobby among the giff.

Habitat/Society: Every giff has a rank within society. Within each rank there are subranks, and within those subranks are color markings and badges. The highest ranking giff gives the orders, the others obey. It does not matter whether the orders are foolish or even suicidal—following them is the purpose of the giff in the universe. A quasi-mystical faith among the giff mercenaries confirms that all things have their place, and the giff's is to follow orders. This makes the giff very happy.

Given their mania for battle and explosive weapons, few giff live past their earlier adulthood. Occasionally, however, a giff will repeatedly distinguish himself in many battles (due no doubt to the bravery imparted by a newly acquired arquebus). These champion giff are much tougher than regular giff and are typically encountered as platoon leaders.

For more information about the society and ecology of the giff, the curious reader should read the entry in the SPELLJAMMER™ boxed set.

closet is double-locked and protected by a *glyph of warding* (save vs. spells or be paralyzed). A rack holding 34 wine bottles covers the wall opposite the door. Although 27 of the bottles contain average wine (worth 1-4 gp per bottle), the remaining seven bottles contain red wine of exemplary vintage (worth 100-400 gp per bottle) from the imperial vineyards of Talangrán.

15. Ship Study. The three anti-personnel ballistas in this room contrast sharply with the richly carved writing desk and bookcases that decorate this small chamber. A quiver with 12 ballista bolts rests beside a posh reading chair in the northeast corner.

Most of the books (written in Talangrán) relate to astrology, meteorology, navigation, cartography, botany, or biology. A few dozen books (belonging to Samostro and Gabrielle) cover the topics of alteration and conjuration/summoning magicks. These few works are enough to research 1st-3rd level spells in those topics, and are worth 5,000 gp and 1,000 XP to a wizard.

16. Officers' Mess. This chamber is as richly appointed as the study (area 15). A carved mahogany table attended by eight matching chairs dominates the room. Two officers are currently finishing a late-night meal (of created food and water), having finished their considerable duties for the day. The two men, priests of different orders, serve as the ship's surgeon and quartermaster.

Doctor Dellsure, ship's surgeon: AL LG; AC 4; MV 12; C8; hp 57; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; W 17, C 15, Ch 16; ML 10; *chain mail +1,* horseman's mace. Spells: *command, cure light wounds* (×3), *remove fear, aid, hold person, silence 15' radius, slow poison, withdraw, cure disease* (×2), *dispel magic, remove curse, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison.* He carries a jar of *Keoghtom's ointment.*

As the ship's doctor, Dellsure is responsible for the health of the *Dama Rosa*'s crew and her elven cargo. The doctor is proficient with both herbal and magical cures for wounds, poisons, and ailments.

Dellsure is a tall, handsome man in his late 20s, with black hair and eyes. His easygoing and compassionate nature have won him the admiration of most of the crew, but the disdain and hatred of others (like Lieutenant Markov) who consider him to be too soft to be aboard Talangrán's strongest warship. Rumors of his previous romantic involvement with the captain have the crew regarding him with a mixture of respect and envy.

The doctor often wonders why he let Alexa talk him into joining her crew. Perhaps if he didn't secretly love her or feel so obligated to her for pulling strings in the imperial court to help his younger brother Gerome, he could have refused her.

Gerome won a duel (over a lady) with the emperor's cousin. The lady's name was never revealed, although there some speculate that she was also related to the emperor. Although the duel was a fair fight, Gerome was imprisoned for the royal cousin's murder.

Soon after, Alexa's maneuvers in court secured Gerome's pardon. Then she began making secret romantic advances toward Dellsure. The *Dama Rosa* needed a doctor for her long exploratory voyage, and Alexa said she thought he was the most qualified and handsome doctor in the entire city. Like so many men before him, he fell prey to her deadly charm and signed the ship's roster.

Their romance died as soon as the *Dama Rosa* left port. Although he had enough common sense to know that a romantic affair between a captain and one of her officers would not go over well with the crew, Dellsure still feels resentful when Alexa orders him about dispassionately. Before the battle on Gorneck and the taking of the elven slaves, Dellsure enjoyed Alexa's confidence (in private, of course) in all personal matters (though she never bothered his principled mind with confidential information).

After he watched the storming of the town and the slaughter of civilians, he realized that the *Dama Rosa*'s true mission was to discover a new source of slaves for the empire. Feeling betrayed, he stormed into the captain's cabin and started a shouting match. He has been confined to the ship as punishment for his insubordination (she didn't have him flogged since it was his first offense) and hasn't spoken to Alexa since.

If a combat situation erupts in this room, the doctor will cast an *aid* spell on the quartermaster and attempt to alert the rest of the ship to the PC's intrusion. Although the doctor's morale is currently low from his depression, he is still loyal to the captain and the empire. His first thoughts, however, always go toward saving life, not destroying it. He will fight to defend his own life, but so far he has not yet had to kill in order to protect it.

Rodrigan, quartermaster: AL LN; AC 4; MV 12; C6; hp 45; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 17, I 15, W 15, C 14; ML 16; XP 2,000; *chain mail +1,* horseman's mace. Spells: *command, create water, cure light wounds, purify food and drink* (×2), *hold person* (×2), *trip, wyvern watch, glyph of warding, water walk.*

The quartermaster has a *rope of entanglement* that he will use against any intruders. He also carries a master key, which will open every locked door on the ship except those in areas 17 and 46.

Rodrigan worships Valx, Talangrán's god of law, discipline, and order. In fact, most of Valx's priests have commissions in the Imperial Army and Navy. Rodrigan is a stern man, but his cynical sense of humor appeals to the good-natured Doctor Dellsure. In spite of the two priests' differing clerical orders, they have become steady friends. The quartermaster uses his clerical magic to preserve the ship's rations and water supply, while the doctor uses his to preserve the crew's health. If combat occurs, Rodrigan will use his rope to stall intruders while Dellsure tries to warn the crew.

The furniture in this chamber is quite valuable (the table is worth 3,000 gp, each chair worth 200 gp). Two large paintings of the Talangrán royal family (worth 2,000 gp each) adorn the north wall, and two smaller paintings of Talangrán landscapes (worth 500 gp each) hang on the west wall.

17. Captain's Stateroom. The private chamber of the captain is spotless, reflecting her personal code of rigid discipline and order.

Captain Alexa sits behind her desk, reviewing the sea charts for the passage back across the ocean. Disarmingly beautiful with her halo of golden hair and cerulean eyes, La Fabulosa (as she is called) has won the acclaim of at least a dozen bards in Talangrán.

She imbibed a potion of *vitality* just after the storm three days ago and hasn't been able to sleep or relax since. Alexa has been killing time between sundown and sunrise with nautical charts and writing in her personal log. Because of the potion-induced alertness,

the captain has a −2 to her chances of being surprised.

Captain Alexa: AL LN; AC −5; MV 12; F11; hp 114; THAC0 10 (4 with Salvavida, 8 with Matamar); #AT 2 (with Salvavida) and 2 (with Matamar); Dmg by weapon type (1d8+7 with Salvavida or 1d6+4 with Matamar); SD +1 on all saves, fire resistance; S 17, I 15, D 18, C 17, Ch 16; ML 16; XP 7,000; *plate mail +4.*

Captain Alexa wears a *ring of fire resistance* and keeps a *luckstone* (a present from her mother) with her at all times. She carries a skeleton key similar to that owned by the quartermaster and also has keys that will open the locks in areas 17A and 46.

Strong but not brawny, Alexa is one of the most renowned sword fighters of all Talangrán, wielding two blades with deadly grace and skill. Specialized in the art of fighting with the long sword and the short sword, she receives a +1 to hit and +2 damage bonus and attacks twice per round with each blade. Her weapons, which she carries at all times, are:

—*Long sword +4:* This sword is lawful neutral in alignment and vaguely sentient, with a 13 intelligence and a 6 ego, and communicates with empathy. The blade can detect enemies (as per a *wand of enemy detection*) in a 20' radius and will always warn Alexa by humming in its scabbard or glowing should any creature intent on harming her approach within range. Alexa calls the sword Salvavida (Lifesaver), and the blade does not seem to mind.

—*Short sword +1, +3 vs. aquatic creatures:* Alexa calls this blade Matamar (Seaslayer).

In addition to her compunction for order, Alexa has a well-developed sense of honor. If formally challenged to a duel, she is bound by honor to accept. She fights fairly and will give ample time for a warrior opponent to prepare before laying on. If she is defeated in personal combat, the captain will agree to surrender her cargo of elven captives.

Alexa has been taught to be ruthless when fighting spell-casters, however. If she cannot overwhelm a spell-casting opponent, she will try to escape and seek out her own wizard and priest officers (Samostro, Gabrielle, Rodrigan, and Dellsure) if they are still alive. The captain will then scour the ship until she finds the PCs and either drives them from the ship or slays them.

Noteworthy furnishings of the room include a writing desk, sea chest, and bed. Alexa's desk, currently unlocked, contains the ship's log and charter. If translated, these papers reveal the true mission of the *Dama Rosa,* as described in "For the Dungeon Master." The sea chest contains clothing, a spyglass, and three potions: one each of *superheroism, vitality,* and *extra healing.* The captain's bed is the work of a master woodcrafter. Carved from a single piece of oak, the headboard depicts a large sea battle in exquisite detail. The entire bed is worth 5,000 gp; the headboard alone is worth 4,000 gp.

The west wall of this chamber is a sloping bay of wide windows, currently thrown open to admit the cool night air. This is a possible point of entry, but one sure to attract the attention of the captain.

A ladder in the southern corner of the room leads upstairs to the bridge (area 5). Voice tubes near the desk can convey the captain's commands to the helm (area 34) and the bridge as well.

17A. Secret Room. A strongbox hidden behind this secret door contains Alexa's personal treasures. Four masterful locks (−30% to a rogue's chances to pick) ward the contents of the strongbox from sticky fingers. Inside, an unlocked chest containing 5,123 gp.

In addition, a small locked coffer sits on a shelf inside the secret room. The coffer is trapped by a fiendishly clever poison needle trap (−25% to a rogue's chances to detect or remove). Unless it is properly disarmed by tripping a hidden catch, the trap injects a lethal dose of poison (save or die). This trap affects even someone using a key to open the lock. The coffer holds Alexa's court jewelry: a gold and diamond necklace (worth 7,500 gp), a pair of diamond earrings (worth 2,000 gp each), a sapphire brooch (worth 1,000 gp; this is actually an *amulet of proof against detection and location,* a rather handy item in the imperial court), and a diamond ring with a large blue-white stone (worth 5,000 gp).

Upper Deck

18. Battle Deck. This large room houses 10 anti-ship ballistas, each loaded with a canister of *mage shot.* There are currently 10 marines here on duty, along with a sergeant and a lieutenant.

Tardo, sergeant: AL LE; AC 6; MV 9; F3; hp 28; THAC0 18; #AT 1 or 1/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 17 (+1 to hit, +1 damage), C 16; ML 14; XP 120; studded leather armor, shield, cutlass.

Bantán, lieutenant: AL LE; AC 1; MV 12; F5; hp 52; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/30 (+1 to hit, +3 damage), D 15, C 17; ML 16; XP 420; *plate mail +1,* long sword.

Tardo and Bantán make a crude and cruel combination. Both are ruthless and seek to exploit the weaknesses of their subordinates. Currently, they are keeping a close watch on the marines in their charge. If any of the marines show the slightest drowsiness, Tardo and Bantán take turns screaming at them for failing in their duty to the *Dama Rosa* (it's going to be a long night for the marines).

19. Battle Deck Armory. This armory has been emptied and its weapons distributed to the crew. The only things left inside are two chests, each containing 10 canisters of *mage shot.*

20. Galley. The meals for the crew are prepared in this small, brick-lined room. Two sailors are whistling as they clean the last of the evening's dinner pots.

21. Pantry. Shelves laden with spices, smoked meats, sausage, dried fruits, grains, and other foodstuffs cover the walls of this room. A covered barrel filled with water sits by the door. There is nothing else of interest to the PCs here.

22. Main Slave Hold. The door to this room is locked and protected by a *glyph of warding* (save vs. spells or be paralyzed). Inside are 18 adolescent male elven slaves, talking contentedly with one another. All of the elves are handsome (even by elven standards) and have been well cared for by the quartermaster and the doctor. They would be worth far less on the Talangrán slave market if they were abused.

Each of the elves has been treated with Vidate, a special medicine prepared by alchemists of Talangrán. Vidate has a strongly narcotic effect in humans and demihumans when administered, but has an additional side effect of complete amnesia in elves, that wears off in 2-8 months. The substance is nonaddictive, but if two or three treatments are administered while the subject is young, the amnesia is irre-

versible. A *neutralize poison* spell is effective against the narcotic effects of the drug, but the temporary amnesia can be reversed only with time or with a *heal* spell. Permanent amnesia can be reversed only with a *wish*.

So far, the elves have received only one dose of the drug each and are currently bathing in its narcotic effects. None of the elves has any memory of his former life, nor do they have the slightest interest in escape. They are quite docile and can be led about wherever the PCs care to take them.

23. Officer's Lounge. The officers come here to relax and enjoy a good game of cards. Four jumbled heaps of cards lie on the table in the center of the room, along with a harmonica and a half-full tankard of cheap wine (belonging to Bantán). There is nothing else of interest here.

24. Gabrielle's Stateroom. This cramped room has been made to appear even smaller than it actually is, thanks to the stack of books on the undersized writing desk and a ballista in the corner. If she survived the orchard encounter, Gabrielle is resting here, recovering her spells.

There is a small perch for the wizard's falcon familiar by the door, next to a chest that is *wizard locked* at the 8th level of experience. Inside, PCs can find some of Gabrielle's personal effects, intimate apparel (she has been having a secret affair with Samostro), and 10 gems (worth 100-400 gp each).

Gabrielle's spell book is hidden in a secret drawer of the desk. The book contains those spells she memorized for the apple orchard encounter plus *read magic, detect magic, identify, find familiar, knock, magic mouth, infravision,* and *slow*.

25. Surgeon's Stateroom. The doctor's stateroom has a comfortable, lived-in look. Dellsure keeps one jar of *Keoghtom's ointment* and two potions of *healing* in a locked wooden cabinet beside his bed. The cabinet has a craftily designed false bottom (1-in-10 chance of detection if PCs search) that conceals three dozen doses of Vidate and a small pouch containing 18 gems (worth 100-600 gp each). The doctor also keeps 432 gp locked in his sea chest by the door.

26. Quartermaster's Stateroom. Rodrigan has warded his room with a *wyvern watch* spell and keeps his quarters in immaculate condition. The locked chest near the bed is further protected by a *glyph of warding* (12 hp electrical damage, save for half damage) and contains 12 gems worth 100-400 gp each.

27. Bantán's Stateroom. The lieutenant's quarters are bare and austere. A locked chest by the door contains 253 gp and six gems worth 100 gp each.

28. Officer's Latrine (port and starboard). These gilded latrines project from the sides of the ship, 6′ above water level. Those in the water directly underneath cannot be seen by the guards on the decks above. This is an ideal (if rather unglamorous) point of entry into the ship.

29. Samostro's Stateroom. The door to this chamber is *wizard locked* at the 9th level of experience. Samostro keeps his chamber in a sloppy condition, with spell components, papers, books, astrolabes, and star charts scattered everywhere.

His sea chest is wide open next to his unmade bed, and his spell book is in plain sight. It contains all the spells he has currently memorized plus *read magic, detect magic, identify, detect evil, detect invisibility, flame arrow, fire shield,* and *conjure elemental.*

30. 1st Lieutenant's Stateroom. If Markov survived the encounter at the apple orchard, he will be found here recovering from the battle. The lieutenant's locked sea chest contains 513 pp and a pouch holding two rubies (worth 1,000 gp each).

A shaving basin sits on a stand by the door, and the polished silver mirror hanging on the wall above is worth 500 gp.

Berth Deck

31. Main Berth. The berthing area for the enlisted men covers most of this level of the *Dama Rosa.* The captain has been driving the crew hard over the past three days to repair the ship after the storm, so off-duty sailors and marines have been using their precious free time to sleep.

A cacophony of loud snoring can be heard even through the hatches in area 6. The area is pitch dark, and PCs traversing the room will have to take care not to disturb the 21 sleeping sailors and 23 snoring marines hanging from the ceiling in hammocks.

The windlass in the center of the deck raises the *Dama Rosa*'s lowered anchor. PCs walking near the anchor rope in the dark must roll a dexterity check or trip over the rope. There is only a 1-in-4 chance that the noise will wake anybody, however.

32. Sick Bay. The realm of the doctor and the wounded, sick bay has been furnished with a medicine cabinet, a small desk, and shelves along the north wall. The shelves contain medicinal herbs, bandages, splints, syringes, and treatises on ailments, diseases, and their remedies. The ship's medical log has been locked inside the writing desk. If translated, it describes the regular treatment of the crew and the elven cargo. The medicine cabinet has been locked to keep sailors away from those medicines with a potential for abuse. In the back of the cabinet, the doctor keeps one jar of *Keoghtom's ointment* and a scroll inscribed with *raise dead* and *neutralize poison* spells at the 10th level of experience.

Eight bunks thrust out from the curved south wall. If any soldiers survived the apple orchard encounter, the most gravely wounded will found here, sleeping after receiving a sedative from the doctor. In addition, one man is recovering here from alcohol poisoning acquired during shore leave (he is the sailor snoring the loudest and mumbling in his sleep). The surgeon decided to let the idiot sleep it off rather than cure him.

33. Armory. This chamber is lined with weapons racks. The 150 cutlasses these racks normally hold have already been distributed to the crew.

34. Helm. A huge tiller projects from the stern of the ship into this room, which is currently unoccupied. When the *Dama Rosa* is at sea, at least two strong men are needed to operate the block and tackle set that moves the tiller and steers the ship. Instructions are typically conveyed from the bridge to the helm through the voice tube in the center of the east wall.

35. Incendiary Store. The door to this room has two superior locks (−15% on a rogue's chances to pick). This brick-lined chamber houses 24 chests, each unlocked and filled with 10 canisters of *mage shot.*

36. Ship's Stores. Equipment used to lift or move heavy objects is stored in this room. Boxes on the floor contain pulleys of various sizes, and 10 coils of thick rope hang on the curved south wall.

37. Armory. The door to this room is locked. This chamber has been filled with 10 trunks and 50 medium-sized round shields. The trunks are very heavy and each contain five chain mail shirts. This heavy armor is typically distributed to marines for land battles (like the orchard ambush), but the soldiers are issued studded leather armor when on board ship (so they don't drown from the extra weight if they fall overboard).

Orlop Deck

38. Upper Hold. This hold and the entire deck below (reached by the hatches) are filled with lumber, two extra masts, barrels of fresh water, and crates of provisions and supplies. The quartermaster's duties include regular inspection and purification of the food and water stores.

39. Bread Room. This chamber is packed with bags of flour, barley, and ground corn. Small dishes with discolored (poisoned) grain have been scattered about the floor. A rat from the bilges just ate his last meal from one of these plates. The deceased rodent can be found on top of a plate near the door.

40. Sail Room. This room has been filled with bolts of sail cloth. Unlike the original sails of the *Dama Rosa,* these bolts of cloth have not been magically fireproofed.

41. Ammunition Storage. All of the extra arrows and bolts for the anti-personnel ballistas are stored here. There are 90 score arrows in quivers hanging from the east and west walls; 80 score ballistas bolts have been stacked on the floor in bundles of 20.

42. Bow Room. A crate by the door contains 40 unstrung short bows. In addition, this room is filled with spare parts for all of the ballistas on board. Given enough time and an assembled model to study, a PC with engineering nonweapon proficiency can build five complete anti-ship and anti-personnel ballistas from the pieces found in this room.

43. Payroll. The door to this room is *wizard locked* at the 9th level of experience. Samostro will be hiding here if he fled from his first encounter with the PCs. Along with the ship's recalcitrant guardian, the aquatic genie Rojoba, Samostro will make his last stand against the PCs.

Rojoba, marid: INT high; AL CN; AC 0; MV 9, fly 15 (B), swim 24; HD 13; hp 91; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 8-32; SD immune to water- and steam-based spells, cold resistant; MR 25%; ML 16; XP 15,000; MC (Genie).

Rojoba can cast the following spells twice per day at the 26th level of magic use: *detect invisible, detect evil/good, detect magic, invisibility, assume liquid form, polymorph self, purify water.* Rojoba can cast the following spells seven times per day: *assume gaseous form, lower water, part water, wall of fog,* bestow *water breathing.*

A parting gift from Alexa's brother (a mage of considerable power), the service of the chaotic Rojoba has become tiresome to the disciplined and orderly captain. Rojoba hates his current mistress (a fact that he has never bothered to disguise) but is bound by the power of the water pipe (similar to an efreeti bottle but applicable to marids) in area 44 to serve Alexa. Lately, Alexa's distrust of the marid has grown, and she has banished the moody genie to the orlop deck to guard the payroll and elven slaves locked in area 45.

Rojoba has taken a liking to Samostro, however, and has tried to persuade the mage to retrieve the genie's water pipe and free him. Ever loyal to his captain, Samostro refused, but his friendship with the intractable marid has grown nevertheless. Rojoba uses all of the powers at his command to protect the mage, the payroll, and the elven slaves.

If Samostro is slain and Rojoba's life is seriously threatened, the marid will bargain with the PCs. If the PCs retrieve the water pipe in area 44 and grant the marid his freedom, Rojoba will grant the party a *limited wish* spell. Having escaped his servitude, Rojoba will shake with a loud belly laugh and disappear back to the plane of elemental Water.

Rojoba has been guarding two locked trunks containing the enlisted men's payroll. Each trunk is protected by a *glyph of warding* (12 hp electrical damage, save for half damage). One trunk contains 7,438 sp, the other contains 9,320 ep.

44. Vault. This door is locked and protected by a *glyph of warding.* Inside are three locked chests (the masterful locks give −30% to a rogue's chances to pick), each trapped with poisoned needles (save or die). One trunk contains 9,828 gp. A special pipe is hidden beneath a false bottom under all the gold. The owner of this water pipe can command the marid Rojoba (see area 43) for up to three years service or receive a *limited wish* in exchange for the aquatic genie's freedom.

Another chest contains 1,020 pp and 112 gems, each worth 100-400 gp (future payment for the officers). A third chest contains assorted gold jewelry that the captain has collected from other ships and islands in the Ebony Sea. The jewelry's total value is 16,000 gp.

45. Aft Slave Hold. The door to this room is locked. Five beautiful elven maidens treated with Vidate are quartered in this room. Well cared for by the quartermaster, these maidens would bring over 25,000 gp each on the slave markets. Refer to area 22 for more information on Vidate and the prisoners' state of mind.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs cannot figure out a way to board the *Dama Rosa* at night, the ship sets sail for her home port before dawn and is not sighted again in this part of the world for several years. At the DM's discretion, Talangrán may send a second expeditionary force, at a later date, to capture more elves.

If the PCs manage to rescue the elves and return them to Sandbar, the adventurers are rewarded as promised by Baron Leonardo, and a feast is held in their honor. If the PCs manage to restore some of the elves' memories, award the party an additional 5,000 XP.

If the PCs can somehow manage to capture the *Dama Rosa* intact, they will have acquired a priceless treasure. With her superior maneuverability, speed, and firepower, the *Dama Rosa* vastly outclasses any other warships currently built by naval powers in the PCs area of the world. Of course, the ship's armaments tend to break down, and the ship's ammunition will eventually be used up, so the *Dama Rosa* should not unbalance a seaborne campaign for very long and might actually earn the PCs a few powerful enemies in the process (with Talangrán at the top of the list). If Alexa manages to escape, she might return some years in the future with her brother (a 14th-level wizard) and the *Dama Rosa*'s sister ship, the *Doña Negra.*

This could be the start of a long waterborne campaign, with the PCs traveling to Talangrán (especially if an affronted elven PC wants to declare war). What the PCs encounter at the heart of this ancient empire is left entirely to the DM, but it should be a place obsessed with intrigue, honor, duty, and deceit.

Ultimately, the PCs might discover that such a powerful warship might be much more trouble (and monetary expense) that it is worth and decide to sell the *Dama Rosa.* This would entail yet another adventure and certainly falls beyond the scope of this module. Ω

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ON WINGS OF DARKNESS

BY CRAIG H. BARRETT

Everyone's a predator, and everyone is prey.

Artwork by Ken Widing

Craig tells us that, in addition to writing and holding down two part-time jobs, he's becoming quite the bicyclist. He frequently bicycles up to writing-partner Kit Kederich's ranch, eight miles from his home and about 1,000' higher, and once or twice a week he makes more lengthy biking excursions of 25 miles. We asked if he plans to enter any bike races in the near future. Craig hasn't stopped laughing yet.

"On Wings of Darkness" is an AD&D® adventure for 4-6 player characters of levels 5-8 (about 32 total levels). The recommended PC mix is two to four warriors (one of whom should be a ranger), a wizard, and a cleric or druid. The party should also contain at least two NPCs, preferably warriors.

The adventure is set in the nation of Calimshan in the Forgotten Realms, in the Marching Mountains near the headwaters of the River of Ice. FR3 *Empires of the Sands* offers helpful background material on this area, but it is not necessary for play. The adventure can easily be set in any similarly placed mountain range.

For the Dungeon Master

Many of the ruling elite of the Calimshite city of Manshaka keep seasonal estates in the southern foothills of the Marching Mountains along the upper reaches of the River of Ice, where they can go to escape from the heat of the Calimshite summer. One such estate belongs to a rich widow, Raisa Enshada, who lives on her estate all year. A fiercely independent, attractive, middle-aged woman, Raisa is accustomed to getting her own way. She holds most of the VIPs of Calimshan in pitiless contempt, including the owner of the neighboring estate, a rich widower named Erthoul Lanzir.

Lanzir is an important moneylender in Manshaka. Like the rest of Manshaka's ruling class, he spends most of his time in the city and goes to his mountain estate only in the summer. On his way upriver to his own lands, Lanzir usually stops at Raisa's estate for a night's lodgings—to her inexpressible disgust, for he insists on attempting to woo her in a clumsy, heavy-handed manner.

This year, however, Raisa has an embarrassing surprise in store for Lanzir. Word has come to her that some strange

predators have gotten loose on Lanzir's estate. Many of Raisa's hardy mountain sheep have been wantonly slaughtered, and her herders report seeing strange flying creatures among the hills at night.

Raisa plans to have the predators hunted down so that she can, with a broad smile of triumph, display the carcasses to Lanzir when he arrives. She hopes the embarrassment of having a woman do his work for him will put an end to his unwelcome attentions. Rather than send her own retainers after the unknown predators, Raisa dispatched a trusted man named Jethoris downriver in search of adventurers who can do the dangerous job for her.

Unknown to Raisa, the mysterious predators are under the control of a band of mercenaries led by a magician named Vedthor. The sheep were killed by Vedthor as he practiced using his *darkenbeast* spell (see sidebar). Vedthor has been sent to murder Lanzir and everyone with him when he arrives at Raisa's estate.

For the Player Characters

You are in a small tavern in the village of Valshada on the upper reaches of the River of Ice. During the roundup season, Valshada serves as a transit point for nearby ranchers who are shipping their livestock downriver to the Manshakan markets. The roundup season has passed, however, and the village—no longer swollen by excess population—is quiet and drowsy with the approaching summer's heat.

Already the growing heat covers most of Calimshan like a heavy woolen blanket, and here in the backlands you don't even benefit from the occasional relief of a sea breeze. The foothills of the Marching Mountains might be cooler, but tavern gossip says that the mountains are desolate and dangerous. Only the highland estates of the nobility, sited in the most favorable locations, offer any chance of comfort during the deep summer—and uninvited visitors are not welcome.

The best chance for a pleasant summer is to be hired by some Manshakan noble as he comes up the River of Ice to his estate, for the nobles always need extra guards, guides, and hunters to serve them during their vacations. Valshada is a good place to find such employment, or so says tavern gossip.

However, you have yet to see a Manshakan nobleman stop here. Only a solitary rider has come in this morning. As you sit at one of the shaded tables in front of the tavern waiting for your noon meal to be served, you see one of the locals talking to that rider and pointing toward your party.

The rider, a short, swarthy man dressed in dusty riding clothes, dismounts before your table. He gives a traditional Calimshite salute and says:

"Noble adventurers, I am Jethoris, agent-at-large for the Lady Raisa Enshada, whose mountain estate lies not far west and north of this place. Am I correctly informed that you have some skill with weapons and are currently in search of employment?"

Jethoris hasn't been able to find any likely adventurers yet, and he's getting a little desperate. Lady Raisa has ordered him to get the hunt started as soon as possible, as Lanzir could arrive any day now. If the PCs look at all competent, he's determined to hire them and head immediately back to Raisa's estate. If the PCs express interest in the possibility of employment, Jethoris makes them an offer:

"Sirs, the Lady Raisa has learned of the depredations of some unknown predators on the borders of her estate and desires that the beasts be hunted down and destroyed. Her own retainers are otherwise occupied, so she has sent me to find brave persons such as yourselves to undertake this mission. I can offer you five silver pieces each per day to undertake the hunt. If you are successful, Lady Raisa will pay you a bonus of fifty gold pieces each. Lady Raisa will also provide you with extra mounts, pack animals, and any supplies you require. The hides of any predators taken must be brought to Lady Raisa, that she may judge the degree of your success, and also that she might establish to her neighbors that their lands are not so well protected as they might believe. Is such an undertaking acceptable to you?"

If the PCs bargain, Jethoris will increase the offer in increments of 1 sp per day, to a maximum of 10 sp per PC. He will increase the potential bonus, in increments of 50 gp, to a maximum of 200 gp per PC. However, Raisa herself must be the sole judge of whether the hunt is successful, and all captured or killed predators belong to her. Jethoris won't budge on those points. Also, the bonus will be a flat amount, not based on the number of monster hides brought in: The PCs are being hired to rid the estate's borders of predators, no matter how many there are.

If the PCs ask about any magical support that Lady Raisa might provide—such as potions of *healing*, magical scrolls, etc.—Jethoris tells them that they will have to ask Lady Raisa about such things when they meet her.

If the PCs refuse these terms, Jethoris thanks them politely, remounts his horse, and rides away. If the PCs change their minds, they should be allowed to catch him before he leaves the village.

If the PCs accept Jethoris's terms, he tells them:

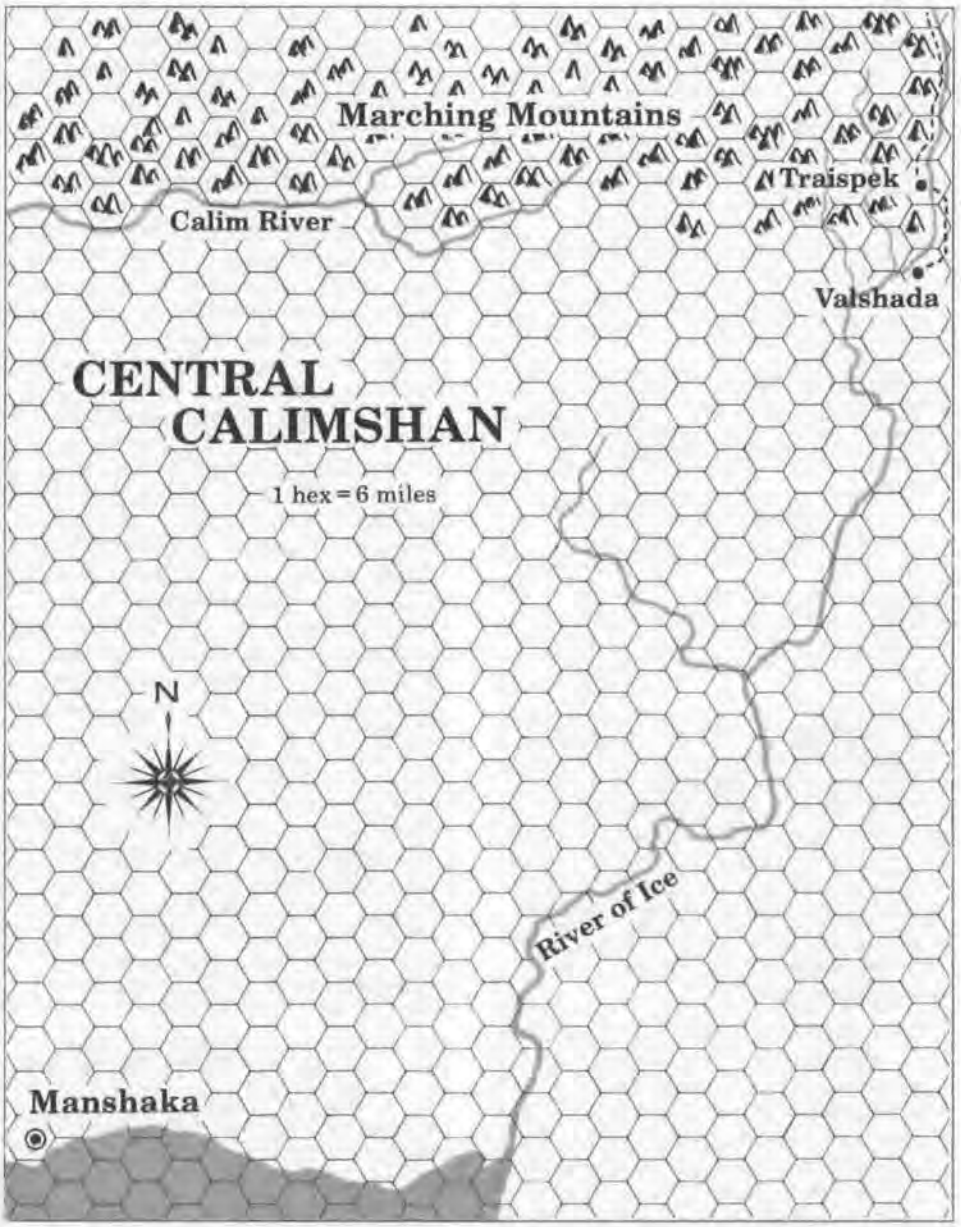
"It is important that we leave at once, since Lady Raisa wants the hunt to begin as soon as possible. We will take a detour north from Valshada to reach Lady Raisa's estate. I know the route, and this will give you a chance to see the country you will be hunting through. Are you prepared to leave with me now?"

If the PCs delay, Jethoris pressures them to leave immediately, but he will not be maneuvered into offering any extra money. If the PCs require mounts, Jethoris hires horses from the villagers on the promise of payment by Lady Raisa (who is well known and has good credit in this part of Calimshan). As soon as the PCs are ready, Jethoris leads them north out of Valshada.

Jethoris: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 9, D 9, C 12, I 15, W 11, Ch 12; ML 10; knife in belt sheath, short bow with quiver of 18 arrows.

Jethoris has proficiencies in the short bow and in information gathering (see the *Complete Thief's Handbook*). He carries only 79 sp and 52 gp but has a letter of credit from Lady Raisa.

Horses, medium: INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; THAC0 19;



#AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-3; SZ L; ML 7; MC.

Jethoris rides one of these horses, and he provides the PCs with as many more as they need.

Into the Mountains

The DM must keep careful track of events in this adventure, both those that affect the PCs and those that occur "offstage." Vedthor attacks the PCs in their first night's camp. The next night he attacks Raisa's estate, and the third night he kills Lanzir when he arrives. Thus, the PCs have only a few days to prevent the massacre of everyone at Raisa's compound.

The map of Central Calimshan and the northern section of the River of Ice is provided for the DM only. This map should not be shown to the players. Jethoris has no maps.

Travel from Valshada to the edge of the foothills costs 1 movement point (MP). From there to Traispek Village (area 1), the route is called a road but for movement purposes should be considered a trail through light hills; this distance costs 5 MP more.

On the Marching Mountains map, clear areas should be treated as light hills; contoured areas should be treated as steep hills. Dashed stream lines indicate intermittent streams, wet only in the rainy seasons. For this adventure, treat them as minor obstacles.

Travel from Traispek Village along the trail to the spring at area 2 costs 3 MP. Thus, from Valshada to the spring costs 9 MP: seven and a half hours for humans on foot, five hours if mounted on medium horses. Since this is early summer, if the PCs start about noon, even allowing an hour to cross the river on the ferry at Traispek, they should have time to get to the spring by nightfall.

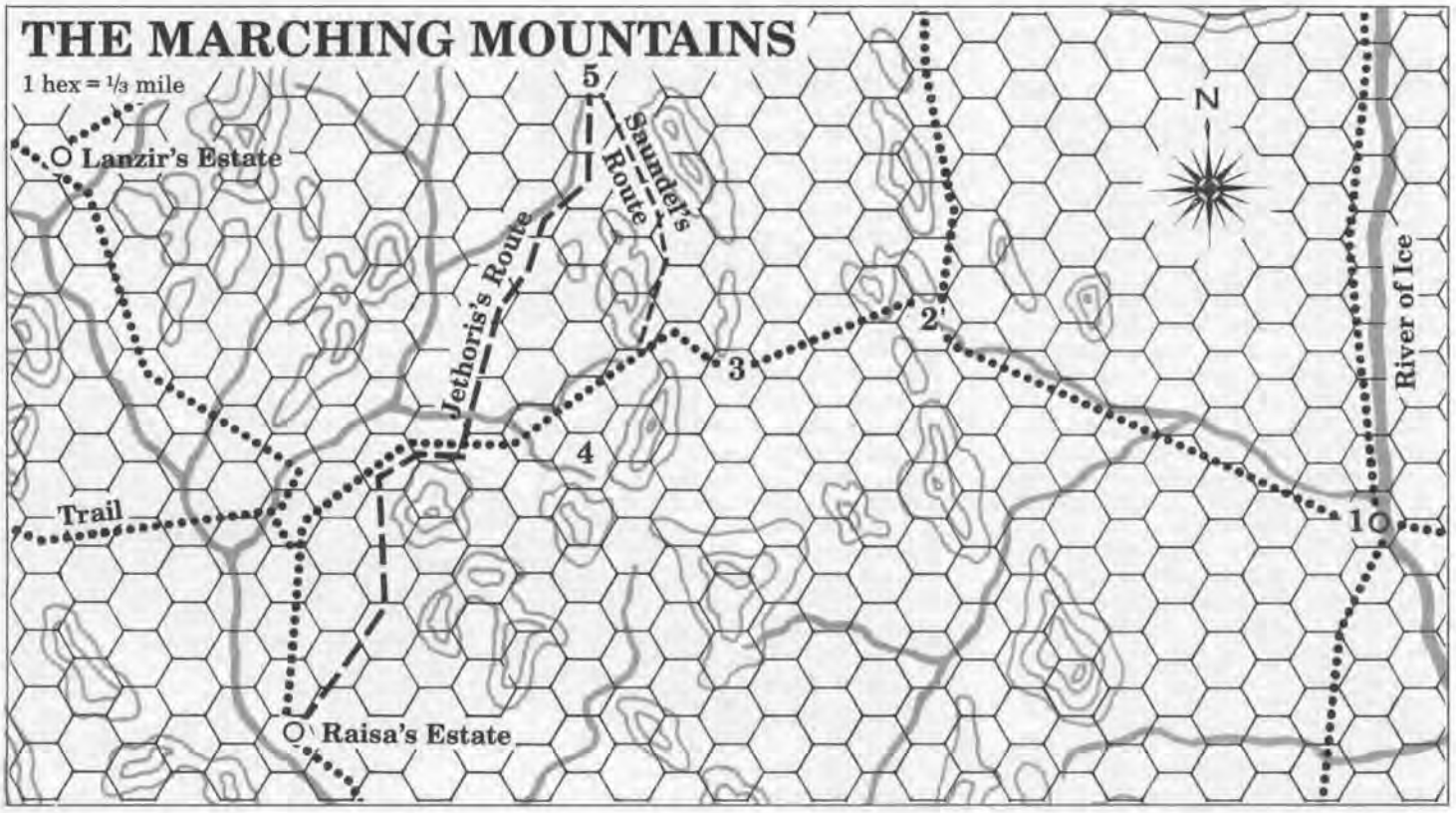
For specific information on movement point costs, see the AD&D 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 125. The DM should feel free to modify the above travel rates to suit his own campaign, but keep in mind the need to coordinate with the timing of Vedthor's attacks.

1. Traispek Village.

Rather than try to cross at Valshada, Jethoris leads you north on the road that follows the east bank of the river. Within a couple of miles, you're traveling through the foothills of the Marching Mountains. The country looks inhospitable—rocky and dry—though there are thriving farms close to the river. The farmhouses appear to be fortified, and all have watchtowers. The road is little better than a trail, and you can't travel very fast because Jethoris isn't much of a rider.

After five more miles, you come opposite a village called Traispek. On this side of the river you see a few cattle pens and a couple of buildings close to the water. Right at the river's edge is a wooden pier. On the other side of the river, opposite the pier, a fortified tower guards the landing where several people are disembarking from a ferryboat. Behind the tower, the village of Traispek appears remarkably small. The hilly country beyond the village looks little different from the land on this side of the river.

As Jethoris leads you along the road to the pier, he tells you: "Traispek is very active during the spring and fall. The local ranches send their herds here, and the herders stay in



the houses on this side of the river. In summer, however, the villagers are largely left to themselves.

"The ferryboat is magical and moves at the command of the ferryman, which is why there are no ropes to guide it across the river. If you have been in Calimshan long, you will know that we have many such magical labor-saving devices."

Jethoris signals the tower, and very soon the ferryboat is sent to pick you up. As you cross the river, you see a tall man in hunting garb sitting on the far bank, a horse tethered to a tree behind him. This man studies the ferryboat carefully. When you reach the middle of the river—close enough that his face can be recognized—the hunter mounts his horse and rides into the hills west of Traispek.

The hunter is Saundel, one of Vedthor's men. By his magic, Vedthor learned of Jethoris's mission and has stationed sentinels to watch for Jethoris's return.

Saundel: AL NE; AC 7; MV 9; F4; hp 28; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 10, C 12, I 14, W 9, Ch 7; ML 12; XP 270; studded leather armor, short bow, quiver with 20 arrows, long sword, belt knife, *dagger +1* in boot sheath.

He has proficiencies in the weapons he carries and in horsemanship. His belt pouch contains 18 cp, 25 sp, 8 gp, and 31 pp. In the bottom of his boot sheath are two gems (worth 275 gp and 150 gp). Saundel is an experienced fighter and should be played as having considerable cunning. If he is captured by the PCs, he answers no questions. He is a tough, veteran mercenary of the worst sort, and will die before giving away anything he knows. Saundel rides a well-rested medium horse with statistics as previously given in "For the Player Characters."

Traispek is an uninteresting little village, smaller than Valshada. The only inn has been shut up for the summer, since Calimshite nobles never stop here on their way upriver. There are no markets where the PCs can do any shopping. The village guardsmen keep to their tower, and the people don't even bother to notice the PCs. If the PCs stop to ask questions about the mysterious hunter, they get little information. The man's been around several days, kept to himself, and didn't bother anyone.

The Road West

Rough roads lead in three directions out of Traispek. Jethoris wants to take the road that goes west into the hills, the same road that Saundel has taken. However, Saundel has a considerable lead on the PCs, and the DM should not let the PCs catch him unless they have magical means of travel.

When the party has traveled about a mile west from Traispek, the road deteriorates into a dirt trail. The DM should begin to roll 1d6 every two game hours. An odd number indicates a random encounter.

If there is an encounter, roll 1d4 + 1d10 and consult the Random Encounters sidebar.

2. The Spring.

A spring bubbles out of the ground just to the north of the trail, at the eastern edge of a cup between the hills. This is a much-used campsite,

Random Encounters

(Roll 1d4 + 1d10)

2. **Thylacine** (jumping tiger): INT average; AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 4+4, hp 31; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-8; SA pounce (20' upward and 50' forward or running leap of 65'; +2 bonus on attack rolls with front claws of it surprises its victim when it jumps); SD +2 bonus to surprise roll; 70% chance to escape detection when motionless in woods or rocks; immune to *charm, fear,* and other mind-influencing spells; MR special; SZ L; ML 14; XP 650; MC/FR1.

The thylacine suffers only 1 hp damage when falling. This thylacine can cast an illusion of human appearance on itself once per day; viewers have a +2 bonus on saving throws against this illusion.

The thylacine is a very cunning hunter. It can recognize magical items, scrolls, and potions, and will destroy them and kill any wizards if it can. This thylacine is hungry and curious, and will stalk the party all day, avoiding a direct confrontation but cutting off any stragglers. If this encounter is rolled again, treat as "No Encounter."

3. **Scorpions, large** (1d6+2): INT non; AL N; AC 5; MV 9; HD 2+2; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1; SA poison sting; SZ S; ML 8; XP 120; MC.

If the PCs kill the scorpions and dig up their burrow, they find 484 cp, 296 sp, 182 gp, and three gems (worth 5-50 gp each) for each scorpion killed. They also find a *dagger +1* and a *Murlynd's spoon* (*DMG,* page 175). If this encounter occurs a second time, use Treasure Type D.

4. **Witherweed:** INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 0; HD 3; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 20; Dmg special; SA see below; ML 20; XP 420; FF/95.

This weed patch is about 20' square. It is dry and burns easily, but anyone inhaling the smoke must save vs. poison or die immediately. The patch burns at a rate of one square foot per round until entirely consumed (about 400 rounds) and creates a smoke cloud nine times the area of the patch in size.

The patch has 20 fronds spaced evenly about its perimeter, each of which can make one attack per round. A frond hit drains 1-4 dexterity points from a victim and causes a total collapse for two melee rounds after any round in which four dexterity points are lost, with a −2 attack penalty for five more rounds. Victims are incapacitated when dexterity reaches 2 or less, and die if dexterity reaches 0. Lost dexterity is restored at one dexterity point per day up to one-half the total loss; the remainder is restored only by casting a *cure disease* spell.

Calimshites make a point of destroying witherweed patches, so this is a very new patch and contains no treasure from victims. However, a section of witherweed that is sliced off will die in five rounds and can make a potent poison gas if burned with proper precautions.

5. **Dakons** (intelligent apes) (2d4+2): INT average; AL LN; AC 5; MV 6; HD 1+1; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10/1-10; SA +2 to hit due to strength and sharpness of claws; SZ M; ML 10; FF/22.

These dakons are almost mascots for the nearby Calimshite estates. Jethoris knows them, and they consider him a friend. If they encounter the PCs in his presence, they assume that the PCs are friends, too, and examine them in great detail, fully aware of how this may embarrass the PCs. The DM can use this for a very amusing, tension-breaking encounter. If Jethoris is not with the PCs, the dakons do all they can to get out of the PCs' way. They do not fight unless attacked. If this encounter is rolled again, treat as "No Encounter."

6. **Wolves** (1d10+4): INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; SZ S; ML 10; XP 65; MC.

The Calimshites do not hunt wolves to extinction but allow individuals and small packs to remain in the hills. Their danger to cattle and sheep is considered to be balanced by their value in keeping down rodents and small animals. This pack is hungrier than usual and has been upset by the unaccustomed activity in the hills and the presence of strange predators. They fight fiercely if the PCs bother them, and attempt to kill any stragglers from the party, but will not attack directly.

7. **Sheep** (10-100): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA charge; SZ M; ML 3; MC (Animal, herd).

These domesticated sheep have no shepherd, which Jethoris finds disturbing. The large males (1 in 10) defend the herd (butting charge, 1-4 hp damage), and the entire herd will panic and stampede if frightened. Any loud noise will panic the herd. Each PC in the path of the resulting stampede (25% chance per PC) rolls 2d4 to determine the number of trampling sheep, with 1-4 hp damage per sheep.

8. **Spiders, large** (2-20): INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6, web 15; HD 1+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison, +2 bonus to save; SZ S; ML 7; XP 175; MC.

The PCs stumble into a nest of webs spun among the rocks beside the trail, or they are attracted to the webs by the sight of treasure (1-10 assorted spilled coins).

9. **Cattle, wild** (5d10+20): INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 1-4; THAC0 19-17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA stampede; SZ L; ML 4; XP 15-120; MC.

The herd is very nervous, and several cattle show signs of having been injured recently. They will panic and stampede at any loud noise, such as the banging of a dropped shield. Each PC in the path of the stampede (25% chance per PC) rolls 2d4 to determine the number of cattle trampling him, with 1-4 hp damage per beast.

10. **No Encounter.**

11. **Lion, mountain** (1-2): INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 3+1, hp 17, 13; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rear claws for 1-4 hp each; SD surprised only on a 1; SZ M; ML 9; XP 175; MC (Cats, great).

12. **No Encounter.**

13. **Hyenas** (2-12): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ S; ML 6; XP 65; MC.

These scavengers have been attracted to the area by the remnants of the darken-beasts' prey. They will not attack unless they have a clear advantage. Any wounded straggler is sure to be harried until he's weak enough to be killed.

14. **Ant lion, giant:** INT animal; AL N; AC 2; MV 9, burrow 1 (in loose soil); HD 8; hp 48; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 5-20; SA see below; SZ L; ML 8; XP 1,400; MC.

The PCs notice what looks like the entrance to a lair, just off the trail. Since ant lions are rare in this region, Jethoris does not recognize this as the entrance to an ant lion's pit. If the PCs investigate closely, there is a 20% chance per PC to slip on the loose soil and slide down the 60' incline to where the ant lion is waiting to attack. If a PC purposely enters the pit, there is a 50% chance per round that he will slide to the bottom. PCs attached to ropes that are tied to trees or held by other PCs will not slip, but if a PC is so incautious as to attach the rope to his belt or weapon strap, the DM should roll to see if the belt or strap breaks.

The ant lion will not emerge from the pit. The lair holds 18 gp, 7 pp, an ordinary metal shield, and a metallic container holding seven doses of *rainbow hues* potion (or any one magical item of the DM's choice). Use this encounter once, then treat as "No Encounter."

and you find a stone-lined fire pit within convenient water-toting distance. The hills north of the spring are wooded scrub, and firewood will not be difficult to find. There are also good places to roll out sleeping bags or pitch tents. However, the site is bare and open; you will have to camp at least 100 yards north of the spring if you want rough, wooded country for a defended camp. Jethoris feels it will be safe enough to camp at the spring but recommends posting a sentry to keep watch during the night.

Attack in the Night

Saundel left Traispek as the PCs arrived and has had time to reach area 3, where Vedthor is spending the night with some of his mercenaries. At midnight, Vedthor sends a wave of 12 darkenbeasts (see sidebar) to attack the PCs' camp.

The horses sense the attack 2-12 rounds before it occurs and are nervous enough to catch the PCs' attention. The PCs may also have some magical means of anticipating danger. The darkenbeasts attack the PCs' horse lines first, striking from four directions simultaneously in order to cripple the party's mobility. Only when all the horses are dead or in flight do the darkenbeasts attack the party. Since Vedthor is contemptuous of Jethoris's personal ability, Lady Raisa's servant will be the last target selected by the darkenbeasts, after the horses and the PCs are dead.

Vedthor considers the darkenbeasts to be completely expendable and keeps attacking with them until all of them (or all of the PCs) are dead. If the attack fails to destroy the PCs, however, Vedthor does not follow up with a second magical attack. He must prepare for Lanzir's arrival at Raisa's estate, and he will leave the PCs to be dealt with by his mercenaries tomorrow.

Vedthor, human male: AL CE; AC 1; MV 12; M12; hp 35; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 11, D 16, C 12, I 18, W 17, Ch 9; ML 15; XP 7,000; *bracers of defense AC 3, ring of water walking, amulet of proof against detection and location, staff of command* (15 charges), *dagger +3* (in right boot sheath), knife (in left forearm sheath), five darts. Vedthor has proficiencies in dagger, staff, and darts.

Vedthor carries considerable wealth on his person (hence his indifference to losing his base camp treasures, see area 5). In a special leather pouch strapped around his waist inside his clothes, he carries seven matched star sapphires worth 5,000 gp each (plus 200% more as a set). This is a legendary set stolen decades ago from a former pasha of Calimshan; Vedthor obtained it by murdering its most recent owner. The set is said to have mystical significance when properly mounted, but Vedthor has never discovered this secret. The pouch is warded with a *fire trap* spell attuned only to Vedthor. He also carries three black opals (worth 1,000 gp each); 20 other assorted gems to the value of 4,500 gp; 76 sp, 73 gp, and 87 pp.

Vedthor speaks seven languages: Common, Alzhedo (of Calimshan), Thorass (of Amn), Elvish (drow), Dwarvish, Giant, and Dragon. He has nonweapon proficiencies in read/write Alzhedo, read/write Thorass, read/write Elvish, spellcraft, herbalism, gem cutting, direction sense, land-based riding, animal handling, etiquette, weather sense, swimming, and ancient history.

Vedthor's spell book includes the following spells. The DM should modify this list as necessary. Spells marked with asterisks (*) are currently memorized; two asterisks (**) indicate the spell has been memorized twice.

1st-level: *alarm, armor, burning hands*, cantrip, change self, charm person, chill touch, color spray, dancing lights, detect magic*, feather fall, friends, hold portal, hypnotism*, magic missile*, mount, read magic, spider climb.*

2nd-level: *alter self, blindness, continual light, darkness 15' radius**, deafness, detect invisibility, ESP*, fog cloud, forget, glitterdust, invisibility, irritation, knock, know alignment, levitate*, locate object, magic mouth, misdirection.*

3rd-level: *clairaudience*, clairvoyance*, delude, dispel magic, explosive runes, fireball, fly*, hold person, infravision, invisibility 10' radius, lightning bolt*, non-detection, protection from normal missiles, slow, suggestion, tongues, water breathing, wind wall.*

4th-level: *confusion*, create darkenbeast**, detect scrying, emotion, enchanted weapon, extension I, fear, fire charm, fire shield, fire trap, fumble, ice storm, illusionary wall, improved invisibility, magic mirror, polymorph other, polymorph self*, wizard's eye.*

5th-level: *animate dead, avoidance, contact other plane, dismissal, distance distortion, domination*, extension II, false vision, feeblemind*, magic jar, passwall, teleport*, wall of force*.*

6th-level: *anti-magic shell, control weather*, enchant an item, ensnarement, guards and wards, legend lore, mislead, true seeing.*

Create Darkenbeast

4th-Level Wizard Spell (Alteration)
Range: 10 yards/level
Components: V, S, M (dried wyvern's blood)
Duration: Cast only in darkness (night, inside, underground, etc.), effects end only when darkenbeast is struck by daylight; *continual light* spell does not break the spell, but *sun ray* spell or magical *sun sword* does.
Casting time: 4
Area of Effect: Special
Saving throw: None

Using this spell, a mage can transform one mammal per his level of experience into a darkenbeast, providing all the mammals to be transformed are within 20' of the mage. Ordinary, nonmagical mammals or semi-intelligent animals are automatically affected, but animals with intelligence of 5 or higher get saving throws against the spell. Humans, humanoids, demihumans, and animals of more than 2 HD are immune to the spell. Dead or alive, a darkenbeast automatically reverts to its true form when the spell ends.

Darkenbeast: INT semi; AL NE; AC 4; MV 18; HD 5+5, hp 29 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1 (fangs) or 3 (claws and fangs); Dmg 3-12 or 1-4/1-4/3-12; SD immune to mind control; MR 25%; SZ M; ML special; XP 975; MC/FR.

Darkenbeasts suffer −1 to attack rolls when exposed to bright light. Darkenbeasts are telepathically controlled by the mage who created them (do not check for morale) and cannot be summoned by another wizard.

The Morning After

If the party survives the darkenbeast attack, Jethoris's first thought in the morning is to collect the carcasses of the darkenbeasts to take to Lady Raisa. However:

> In the morning you discover that the bodies of the monsters you killed during the night have all been transformed into dead sheep. When Jethoris sees this he exclaims:
>
> "This is foul magic! If these are the monsters that attacked us last night, then it is not some strange predator that prowls the land. It is some evil wizard who transforms innocent sheep into terrible monsters. The danger is greater than Lady Raisa imagined. We must get word to her at once. If we continue west along this track, we will come to Lady Raisa's estate more quickly than trying to cut across the hills."

If the PCs suggest that the best-mounted member of the party be sent ahead to alert Lady Raisa, Jethoris is reluctant to split the party up for fear they can then be attacked piecemeal. The estate is only six miles away by trail, and traveling at foot-pace they should be able to make that in about five hours. If any PCs try to reach the estate on their own, see "Vedthor's Ambush."

3. Lanzir's "Shepherds."

> A little over a mile along the trail, you come upon a campsite where six shepherds and two dogs are lingering over their morning meal. As you approach, they stand and one steps forward to greet you:
>
> "Sirs, we are from Lord Lanzir's estate to the north, come searching for a child who went missing some days ago. Have you seen an eight-year-old boy, tow-headed, dressed in brown? He answers to the name of Thedran."
>
> Jethoris greets them: "I am Jethoris, Lady Raisa's agent. We have seen no such child. But have you obtained Lady Raisa's permission to search her lands?"
>
> The men exchange glances and the spokesman says: "No, sir. We had no idea we had wandered onto Lady Raisa's lands. Will you grant us permission to search for a couple of days longer? We fear for the boy's safety."
>
> Jethoris hesitates, then says: "Three days, no more. Next time, come and ask, and perhaps we will send out men to help you." Jethoris turns and says to you: "Come, we must keep moving."
>
> When you are out of earshot of the camp, Jethoris says to you: "I like not the look of those men. Did you notice their dogs? Those are not sheep dogs, or I am much mistaken. I think we must watch our backs for a time."

The DM should modify the above scene if the PCs want to question the shepherds. But the PCs will get little information from the men, who deny having seen anything out of the ordinary.

The PCs may notice for themselves that the two dogs don't seem quite right for sheep dogs. If one of the PCs is a ranger or a druid, there is a 5% chance per experience level that he'll notice signs that a horseman has been at this camp within the last 24 hours. If questioned about the tracks, the shepherds admit that a horseman came this way late yesterday but claim that he continued on without stopping.

This was the camp where Saundel met Vedthor, and from which Vedthor launched his midnight attack against the PCs. After the attack was over, Vedthor left these men to watch for the

PCs and to ambush them if a good opportunity offered itself. Vedthor then *polymorphed* himself into a bird and flew to where the main body of his mercenaries waits to attack Raisa's estate to the southwest. Saundel was left to observe the situation from the hill to the north, where he is now keeping carefully out of sight.

Kadarsh, mercenary leader: AL LE; AC 10; MV 12; F6; hp 45; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 14, C 12, I 10, W 10, Ch 16; ML 12; XP 420; belt knife, shepherd's staff, sling.

Kadarsh has ring mail armor, a *long sword +2,* a mace, two *throwing daggers +1,* and three other daggers hidden in his bedroll. His proficiencies include ambidexterity, the two-weapon fighting style (see the *Complete Fighter's Handbook*), the weapons he carries (including the sling and the shepherd's staff), endurance, and running. His purse holds four gems (250 gp, 100 gp, 50 gp (×2)), 8 pp, 19 gp, and 22 sp.

Mercenaries (3): F3; hp 28, 25, 22; THAC0 18; XP 120; other statistics as given above; belt knife, shepherd's staff, sling. They have studded leather armor, short bows with quivers of 20 arrows each, long swords, and daggers hidden in their bedrolls. These mercenaries have proficiencies in their own weapons and in running, but not in the shepherds' weapons. In their purses they each have coins worth 100 gp.

Dog handlers (2): AL CE; F4; hp 38, 30; THAC0 17; XP 175; other statistics as given above; belt knife, two javelins each; purse with 180 gp each. They have leather armor, short swords, two extra javelins and two throwing daggers each hidden in their bedrolls. The dog handlers have proficiencies in all the weapons they carry.

Each dog handler carries a *whistle of command +1* on a silver chain around his neck, magically attuned to his own dog. The whistle can be used once every five rounds to give the dog one extra attack in the round in which the whistle is used. Each such attack is at +1 to hit, with a successful attack automatically delivering maximum damage +1. In addition, by hanging the whistle around his neck, the handler can telepathically command his dog and can see through the dog's eyes at will, both to a range of one mile.

If the PCs capture a whistle, they will find it is useless until they can get a cleric to pronounce the spells *animal friendship, command,* and *animal summoning I,* in that order, on the whistle. This activates the magic whistle into a telepathic bridge between a particular individual and a particular animal who are in the cleric's presence at the time. Because of the nature of the magical whistle, only normal or giant animals with intelligence scores of 4 or less and who are already friendly to the handler can be used. Fantastic or magical animals cannot be controlled in this way.

Only a single bridge can be made at any time with each whistle, but a new bridge can be made after an old one is broken. However, only the death of one of the partners in the link can break the bridge. Upon the violent death of one partner, the other partner always attacks the killer with a berserker rage that cannot be controlled until 4d4 rounds have passed or until the killer is dead. The surviving partner will be grief-stricken and unable to initiate any action other than survival for 1-3 days.

Dogs, war (2): INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 2+2, hp 15 (belongs to the 38-hp dog handler), 12 (belongs to the 30-hp dog handler); THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ M; ML 10; XP 65; MC. Both dogs are battle trained.

4. The Massacre.

> After leaving the shepherds' camp, the trail curves north around a high, tree-covered hill, then turns southwest between that hill and another. As soon as you come out from between the two hills, you see three vultures circling in the sky to the southwest, perhaps a half-mile away. Every so often, the vultures swoop down to the ground to peck at something lying there.

If the PCs leave the trail to investigate, about a quarter-mile south of the trail they find another campsite, the scene of a massacre that took place two or three days ago according to the signs. Five shepherds and three sheep dogs are dead, as well as two sheep—one of them with a shepherd's knife in its ribs and it's teeth on the shepherd's throat.

The vultures have been at the dead, and it isn't a pretty sight. None of the men are recognizable. The nearest vultures are gorged, unable even to fly.

> "These were my lady's people, I think," Jethoris tells you. He is clearly stunned by the sight. "Can we doubt what happened here? The same fate would have befallen us last night, had you not been such good fighters. Lady Raisa will be furious."

The three active vultures fly into a dry ravine to the south, apparently trying to get at something that's hidden from the PCs' sight. If the PCs investigate, they find a young shepherd, the sole survivor of the party. He managed to crawl away from the scene of the massacre and wedge himself between two large rocks, out of reach of the scavengers. He is badly wounded and very weak from exposure. If the PCs rescue the boy, he appears to recognize Jethoris, who remembers that the child's name is Nishan.

> The boy hasn't the strength to sit up. He rolls his eyes and whispers so softly that it's difficult for you to hear him:
>
> "They came . . . in the night . . . All around . . . Monsters from hell . . . ."
>
> "That's all right, boy," Jethoris tells him. "We know. We saw them too."
>
> "Tell Mistress," the boy says. From some hidden reserve he lifts his hand to clutch at Jethoris's sleeve. "Tried to . . . get away . . . Tell Mistress . . . have to . . . stay alive . . . tell Mistress!"
>
> "We'll tell Lady Raisa." Jethoris is doing his best to comfort the boy, but it's clear that the boy is delirious and perhaps dying even as you watch.

Unless the PCs have some means of healing Nishan, he dies in 3-10 (1d8+2) rounds.

Nishan: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 10, D 9, C 15, I 8, W 9, Ch 11; ML 12; belt knife, sling, pouch of smooth stones, shepherd's staff (lying on the ground at the site of the massacre). Nishan has proficiency with the sling and shepherd's staff.

Vultures, common (8 gorged, 3 active): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 3, fly 27 (E); HD 1+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SZ S; ML 6; XP 65; MC.

The Second Ambush

Whether the PCs have the means of healing Nishan or not, Kadarsh and his mercenaries attack the party 6-15 (1d10+5) rounds after Nishan is found.

Kadarsh and his men, accompanied by Saundel, have followed the PCs. When they see that the PCs have found a survivor of the massacre, they fear that the boy may be able to reveal something important, so they attack while there's a chance of catching the PCs by surprise.

Saundel does not join the attack but remains behind on the nearest hill to the northwest. He is in plain sight now and close enough for Jethoris and the PCs to recognize him as the hunter they saw at Traispek.

Kadarsh's force fights only so long as it appears they have a chance to defeat the PCs; they do not attempt to take prisoners. If Nishan is alive when they attack, they attempt to kill him first. As soon as they suffer 50% or greater losses (four dead, including the dogs), the mercenaries break off the attack and retreat to the hill from which Saundel is watching.

If one of the dogs is killed, that dog's handler immediately attacks with berserk rage (+1 to hit, no morale checks), no matter how much damage Kadarsh's force has suffered. He fights until killed, and if Kadarsh's force is in retreat, no one comes back to help him. The same is true of a dog if his handler is killed.

Jethoris insists that the party must pursue Kadarsh's force. If the PCs pursue, Saundel retreats to the north, leaving the remnants of the mercenaries to act as a rearguard. If Kadarsh's force is wiped out, Jethoris insists that the PCs must pursue Saundel.

If the PCs want to end the pursuit, fearing to be led into an ambush, Jethoris tells them:

> "I believe the monsters can attack only at night. Why else would these men have attacked us during the day? Now is the time to find the wizard and destroy him. We must act at once! I will double your pay from Lady Raisa, if I have to do it from my own money, if only you will do as I ask!"

Saundel continues to retreat just out of reach, making no attempt to get away from the PCs. Saundel's orders from Vedthor are to keep Jethoris's party away from Raisa's estate at all costs, even if it means sacrificing Vedthor's base camp. Since Jethoris's party constitutes a force of unknown potential, Vedthor wants no risk that they'll interfere with his plans.

If the PCs continue to pursue Saundel, his retreat leads them up through the hills and about two miles from the site of the massacre, to Vedthor's base camp (area 5).

If the PCs insist on going to Raisa's estate immediately, see "Vedthor's Ambush."

Mydron the talking owl: INT exceptional; AL LG; AC 3; MV 1, fly 36 (C); HD 2+2; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-2; SA swoop (if from 50' or greater, each attack is +2 and inflicts double damage but no beak attack possible); SD never surprised (−6 on his surprise roll at night, −3 during the day while roosting); MR 20%; SZ S; ML 15; MC.

Mydron has double normal ultravision, quadruple normal hearing, and flies in total silence. He can *detect good* and has exceptionally high intelligence and wisdom of 21 (with appropriate spell immunities: *cause fear, charm person, command, fear, forget, friends, hold person, hypnotism, ray of enfeeblement, scare*). He can speak the following languages: Common, Great Owl, Alzhedo (of Calimshan), Tethyr Common, Thorass (of Amn), Elvish, Dwarvish, and the storm giant language.

Even among his own kind, Mydron is far from ordinary, for he has the ability to cast clerical healing spells as if he were a 12th-level cleric (but gets no bonus spells for high wisdom): *cure light wounds* (six times per day), *slow poison* (five times per day), *cure blindness or deafness* and *cure disease* (five times per day combined), *cure serious wounds* and *neutralize poison* (three times per day combined), *cure critical wounds* (twice per day), *heal* (twice per day).

Mydron is a useful character to keep around, which is why Vedthor took him prisoner about a year ago. Vedthor has kept him as a mobile "hospital unit" for his mercenaries, and as a personal advisor (Mydron is wise, but he finds it difficult to lie, even to Vedthor). The DM should avoid letting Mydron be killed in the adventure, since he's important to keeping the PCs honest if they should end up with Vedthor's seven matched sapphires after the adventure is over.

Vedthor's Ambush

If any of the PCs attempt to reach Raisa's estate (if they come within five hexes of area 6) before the day on which Lanzir is scheduled to arrive (the third day of the adventure), they will be ambushed by Vedthor and his entire band of mercenaries. Vedthor intercepts the PCs, having anticipated their approach through his magic, as soon as they are within four hexes of the estate, no matter which direction they come from.

Vedthor's band includes himself and the mercenaries Berden Akavian, Masrakian, Tevian Jenour, five 4th-level fighters, and four 2nd-level fighters. All are mounted on medium horses. See areas B and G of "Raisa's Estate" for statistics on the mercenaries.

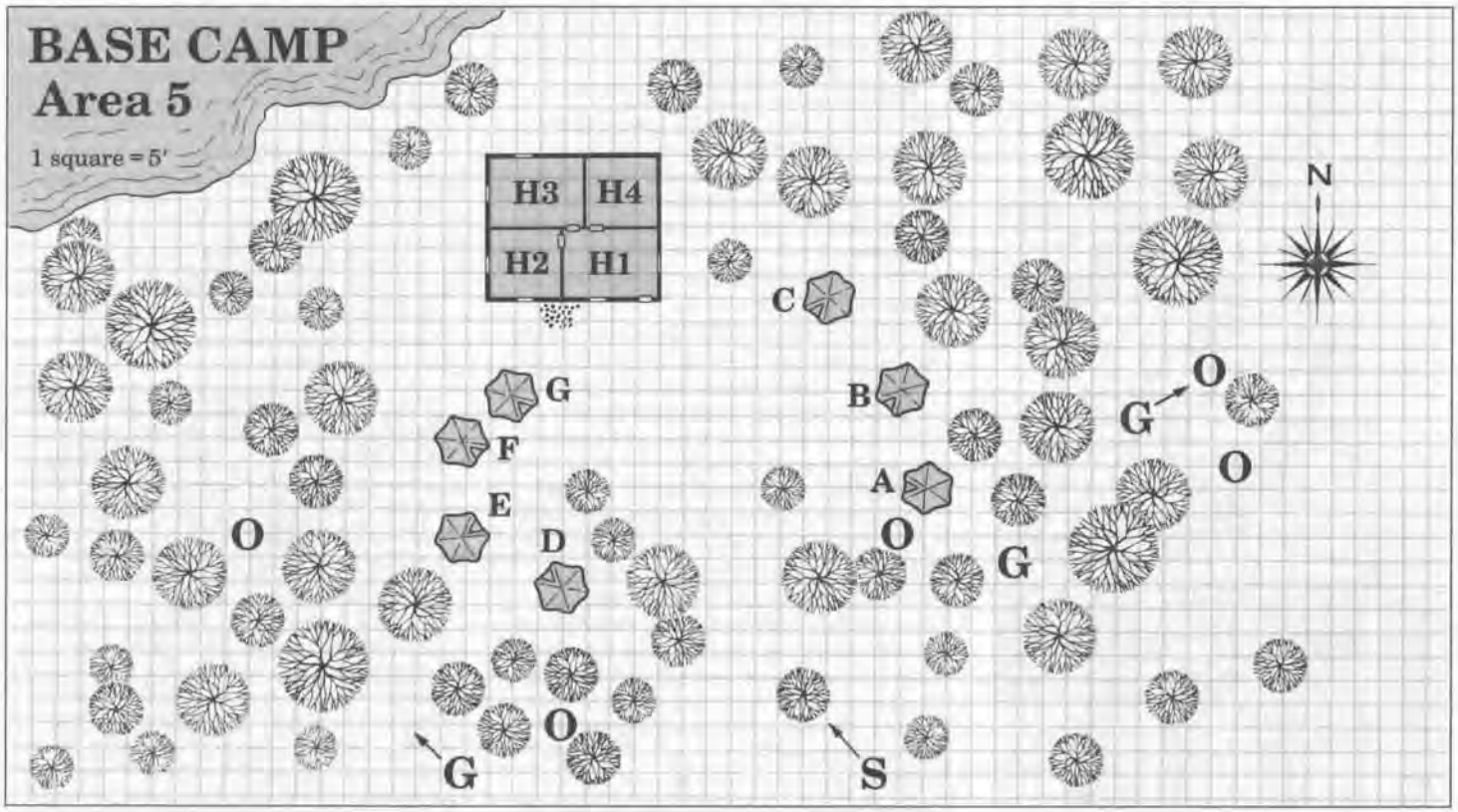
If the PCs approach Raisa's estate on the day when Lanzir is scheduled to arrive, they find Vedthor's band dispersed as described in "Raisa's Estate." Vedthor has his entire attention centered on Lanzir's approach, and he will not expect the arrival of the PCs.

5. The Base Camp.

You come out of the hills to find yourselves on the edge of a small valley. On the near side of the valley, about a half-mile north of you, is a small lake with some unusually tall trees and a small house or cabin with several tents pitched beside it. The retreating hunter is between you and the lake, almost to the trees.

Five giant owls are dodging back and forth among the trees and around the house and the tents. Three hill giants are chasing them. The owls appear to be playing some kind of game with the giants, but the giants aren't playing games. They're doing their best to down the owls with clubs and thrown rocks but are unable to deal with the owls' agility in the air.

Jethoris tells you: "This is a shepherd's camp for the estate just north of Lady Raisa's. Perhaps the magician who set those monsters loose in the night has taken it for his headquarters. The owls are a good omen."



On the Base Camp map, Saundel's location is marked by an S, that of the three hill giants by G's, and the positions of the five owls by O's. Arrows show the directions Saundel and the giants are facing at the time the PCs first see the camp. After spotting the PCs, Saundel takes 2-12 rounds to catch the giants' attention and pull them away from fighting the owls. He sends them to the pile of rocks in front of the house (area 5H) with orders to bombard the PCs as the party approaches.

Saundel guides the defense of the camp as well as he can and takes part in the fighting. However, if it looks like the camp will fall to the PCs, he attempts to leave and circle around to the south to give warning to Vedthor.

Hill giants (3): INT low; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 12+1-2; hp 85, 65, 50; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 or by weapon type (2d6+7); SA hurl rocks for 2-16 hp; SZ H; ML 13; XP 3,000; MC (Giant, hill); clubs. Each giant carries 50 gp in his pouch (wages from Vedthor).

These three giants, with the instinct of intelligent predators, have sensed disorder among the Calimshite estates and have come down to take advantage of it if they can. Vedthor hired them to guard his base camp while he's away and has instilled sufficient fear with his magic that they'll follow his orders as closely as they can.

However, the giants are not willing to die for Vedthor. Morale checks should be made for each giant individually as soon as any one of them suffers 25% hp losses and again at 50% hp losses. If any one giant fails a morale check and begins to retreat, all the giants attempt to escape. If any giant is killed, the others immediately attempt to escape, without any thought of revenge against the PCs.

Owls, giant (5): INT very; AL N; AC 6; MV 3, fly 18 (E); HD 4; hp 30, 28, 27, 25, 24; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/2-5; SA surprise; SZ M; ML 12; MC.

These giant owls, being intelligent nocturnal predators, are very alarmed by the presence of darkenbeasts in the area. They have been hunting for the cause of the trouble and have found Vedthor's camp and the talking owl held prisoner there (see "Mydron the Talking Owl" sidebar). Sympathetic to the imprisoned owl, they are desperate to free him but have not yet found a way to deal with the hill giants. If the PCs attack the hill giants, the giant owls immediately do everything they can to help, even risking their own lives.

Wise Words From an Owl

If the PCs win the fight for the camp, the remaining giant owls flock around the tent containing Mydron's cage (area 5G), tear down the hide walls, and search for some means to set Mydron free. If the PCs approach the cage, the giant owls back away to give the PCs a chance to open the cage.

The cage is a 6' cube with leather handles attached to each corner as supports for two long carrying poles. Half of one side of the cage is a door, held shut by a simple latch with an excellent lock (−20% to pick; see *DMG*, page 36). The key is not in the camp.

As soon as the PCs approach the cage, Mydron addresses them in Common:

> "Good sirs, kindly set me free from this cage and I will certainly reward you most pleasantly, yes I will. I believe you will find the latch is weak and can be easily broken off."

The latch is clearly of poor quality and can be broken by a single hammer-blow delivered with a strength of 16 or greater. A strength of 14 or greater requires two hammer blows, 12+ strength takes three blows, and a strength of only 10 requires four hammer blows to break the latch.

If the PCs bargain with Mydron for his release, he offers to show them where all the treasures in the camp are hidden, and even to tell them about Vedthor's other treasures (he knows about them all), but thereafter he will not trust the PCs, even though outwardly he will treat them the same as if they'd voluntarily freed him. The remainder of the module assumes that the PCs voluntarily freed Mydron.

As soon as the door is opened, Mydron flies out and perches on top of the cage. He stretches his wings and preens for a minute while studying the PCs one at a time. Finally he speaks:

"My name is Mydron, good sirs. There is treasure in this camp. If you have not already found it, I can guide you to it. But stop and listen to what I have to say. Do any of you happen to be servants of Lord Erthoul Lanzir or Lady Raisa Enshada?"

Jethoris says immediately: "Sir Owl, I am Lady Raisa's agent, and these good people with me have agreed to take her pay for hunting down the evil killers that plague this land—which we appear to have done here."

The owl's head wags from side to side and he says:

"No, no. No, no. You've more work to do, I have to tell you. Now listen to my tale, and if you do as I say you will be rewarded with more than wealth, for you will have the virtue of doing good works. Yes you will.

"Erthoul Lanzir is a moneylender, which you may or may not know, and one of his clients is a Manshakan merchant prince named Zaraith Noukam. Noukam is a rich man, though his wealth is built on sand, as the saying goes. Everything he owns, warehouses, merchant ships, and all, was purchased with borrowed money—most of it from Lanzir. Lanzir now threatens to call in all that money and take over Noukam's many properties. Noukam can do nothing about it, for Lanzir has let it be known that anyone who lends to Noukam makes an enemy of Lanzir. He is an evil man, Erthoul Lanzir!

"But not so evil as Zaraith Noukam. If Lanzir and all his heirs should die before the debts can be called in, Noukam could keep his wealth, for he would have time to sell some of what he has to pay most of what he owes. Since Lanzir and his family always come to spend the summer at his mountain estate . . . and since he always stops for a night or two at Raisa Enshada's estate first . . . wouldn't it be to Noukam's benefit if Lanzir and his heirs died there? Indeed, everyone at Lady Raisa's estate would have to be eliminated. No one would ever guess that it was Noukam's doing, because everyone would think it was Lady Raisa that the killers came after.

"So Noukam hired a man as evil as he—Vedthor by name—who leads a band of killers. This Vedthor knows a spell that turns sheep into monsters who kill at night and return to their normal shape by day. So Vedthor will kill everyone at Lady Raisa's estate on the night that Erthoul Lanzir arrives—and that is tomorrow night! Vedthor told it to me himself. And the good deed I want you to do is to stop the murder of all the innocents."

Jethoris, clearly alarmed, turns to you: "We must leave at once for my lady's estate!"

If the PCs agree with Jethoris, Mydron stops them and offers to explain what they're running into. Or, if the PCs ask Mydron for further information, he explains:

"You're no match for Vedthor. He is a magician to be wary of. But listen to me and I'll tell you how to stop him. How do I know? I watch, I listen, I think. I'm told some things, I guess at others. Vedthor used me as his physician, listened to my wisdom, and talked unguarded.

"Many years ago, Vedthor got hold of a cursed crystal ball. When he looked into the ball, he became its slave. He thought to free himself by the power of his will, but ever after, whoever was owner of the crystal ball was master of Vedthor. Vedthor lost the ball before he could destroy it and has looked for it a good long time, but Noukam found it first. Chance that was, for good or bad. That ball is to be Vedthor's wages for doing this evil deed. But Vedthor doesn't trust Noukam, and Noukam doesn't trust Vedthor.

"Noukam must be present with the crystal ball tomorrow night, or Vedthor won't complete the deed. If you can find where Noukam will be waiting near the estate, get the crystal ball away from him, and cast a spell to read magic or detect evil, you will know in less than a minute the way to defeat Vedthor.

"But you must go to Raisa Enshada's estate on the night that Lanzir is to die or Noukam won't be there and Vedthor will find you and kill you. So come with me now and I will show you where Vedthor's treasure lies, then you can rest before you start and still be in plenty of time."

Mydron takes off from the top of the cage. If the PCs follow him, he'll show them the treasures of the base camp.

5A-D. Mercenary Tents. These tents were set up for Vedthor's mercenaries.

Each contains three camp cots, blankets, and the backpacks of the mercenaries. Vedthor led his men to believe they would return here for their heavier gear. The packs hold extra clothes and personal items but little of value.

5E. Storage Tent. This tent holds general gear for the group. There are two extra cots with blankets, five packs of trail rations, a bundle of climbing equipment, and six very heavy reinforced packs crammed with 2,500 coins (weighing 50 lbs.) each. The coins appear to be an even mixture of copper and silver, with perhaps 1% being gold coins. Mydron warns the PCs that the coins were left by Vedthor as a lure (so he has deduced from clues that Vedthor inadvertently let drop), but he does not know that Vedthor put a subtle trap on them. In fact, each pack has *antipathy-sympathy* and *limited wish* spells (from a scroll) cast on it, so that anyone who touches even a single coin will be stricken with mild greed—not enough to make him fight his friends for possession of the coins, but enough to make him unwilling to leave the coins behind. The emotion will last only 48 hours, but Vedthor calculates that the weight of the coins will be enough to slow down anyone who captures the base camp.

5F. Vedthor's Tent. The wizard's camp cot is layered with silken coverlets. The only other furnishings are a camp chair, a small table holding a simple lantern, and a backpack containing Vedthor's extra clothes (good quality) and personal possessions. An ordinary leather pouch is hidden beneath the silken coverlets. This pouch contains a plain-looking book, a *manual of stealthy pilfering* (*DMG,* page 174).

Vedthor obtained the manual at the same time he obtained the seven matched sapphires and knows what it is. Since the manual is useless to him, Vedthor has left it behind as part of the general lure of the base camp, to distract anyone who might interfere with him. The pouch is warded with a *fire trap* spell, but Mydron doesn't know that. The owl does know what the manual is and will warn any priest, ranger, or paladin against reading even one word of it.

If the party contains no thief, a fighter or mage might want the manual to sell at a later date. The price depends on the buyer's level. Since study of the manual will elevate a thief to the midpoint of the next higher experience level, the DM might secretly decide on a purchase price of 1 cp per experience point the thief would acquire (a mid-10th-level thief who moves up to mid-11th-level would acquire 140,000 XP and would have to pay 1,400 gp for the manual). How much of this the PCs actually get depends on their bargaining ability.

5G. Demolished Tent. This tent was torn down by the giant owls. It holds only Mydron's cage, two long padded poles (the cage was carried on the shoulders of two men), a single camp chair set in front of the cage, and a large backpack holding packets of dried and salted meat.

5H. Cabin. This small house is sometimes used by Lanzir's shepherds. Vedthor and his mercenaries preferred their tents and have not made use of the cabin, except for the storage room (area H4).

5H1. Common Room. This room contains a table and four chairs in the northeast corner, a fireplace in the southwest corner, and a rudely made cupboard (containing eight sets of wooden plates and mugs) against the south wall. A baked clay candlestick holder on the table supports a half-burned candle. The wooden floor is badly scuffed and scarred by many years of use and neglect. There are unglazed, shuttered windows in the east and south walls. The room is relatively clean but shows obvious signs of recent use.

5H2. Bedroom. This spartan sleeping room contains three wooden beds with straw-stuffed mattresses set with their heads against the western wall. Rough wooden footlockers (merely boxes with lids) containing woolen blankets sit at the foot of each bed. A set of empty wooden shelves leans against the east wall. There are shuttered windows in the south and west walls.

5H3. Bedroom. This is another sleeping room, with four wooden beds set with their heads against the northern wall and a blanket-storage box at the foot of each. An iron candlestick holder sits on table in the southwest corner, and two chairs have been pulled up to the table. A set of empty wooden shelves appear to be nailed to the south wall. There are shuttered windows in the west and north walls.

5H4. Storage Room. Wooden shelves line all four walls of this windowless room. The shelves on the south wall hold seven wooden boxes, each 3′ × 2′ × 1′. Three of the boxes are empty, but the other four hold sealed bags of nonperishable trail rations. Another shelf is bare except for a box of two dozen candles. The northwest corner of the room is partitioned off as a bin filled with small pieces of firewood.

Mydron knows this room contains the most useful treasures in the camp, but he does not know about the traps in the room. *Explosive runes* are written on the wall above the wood bin, where anyone opening the door will automatically see them (6d4 +6 hp damage; no save for rune-reader, half damage for others within 10′ if save is made). If the PCs remove the wood in the bin, they discover *explosive runes* written on the underside of the first three pieces of wood. At the bottom of the bin is a small chest (40 lbs. capacity), closed with a good quality lock (*DMG,* page 36). The chest is warded against opening with a *fire trap* spell.

Inside the chest are four pouches (three containing 380 gp each, the fourth containing 210 pp), a small casket (containing assorted gems, total value 1,000 gp), and a paper with a list of names and numbers. The casket has an *attraction* spell on it (reverse of *avoidance* spell). The moment any PC touches the casket, a *magic mouth* appears on the inside top of the larger chest and announces:

"You've made it this far. Now take what you've found and be gone. If you bother me again, your troubles will only get worse."

Not knowing that Vedthor planned to abandon the camp, his mercenaries left some of their personal treasure in the chest for safe keeping (the list of names and numbers is an inventory of what belongs to whom). They hid the chest in the wood bin and asked Vedthor to put magical wards on the strongbox and on the room to protect their treasure. He did this happily, knowing that the additional treasure would contribute to the distraction he'd planned. If no one showed up to interfere, they could all return to the camp and claim their belongings. If someone (such as the PCs) did attempt to interfere, the treasure

would be an added inducement for them not to take any further risks.

The Way South

If the PCs go to help Raisa, Mydron and the giant owls offer to scout ahead for Vedthor, Noukam, and any other enemies who may lie in wait.

Jethoris knows the best route to get to Raisa's estate. Following his route (see the Marching Mountains map) will cost the PCs 10 movement points but will bring them to Raisa's estate unobserved. If the PCs are reduced to a foot pace, that will take them a little over eight hours. If they can still travel at mounted rate (remember, the party's travel rate is that of its slowest member), it will take them a little over five hours.

If the PCs agree to this, Mydron and the giant owls fly ahead to scout. They arrange to rendezvous in a grove of trees northeast of Raisa's estate (see the map of Raisa's Estate).

Raisa's Estate

If the PCs arrive at the rendezvous with Mydron at any time on the day Lanzir is scheduled to arrive, the Estate Map shows the situation as Mydron reports it to them. The DM may want to give the Estate Map to the players, since everything it shows could be reported by Mydron to the PCs.

At dusk, it will be dark enough for Vedthor to create the darkenbeasts. The PCs have that long to act before Vedthor's attack begins. Exactly how many turns that will be depends on how fast the PCs have come south from the base camp (area 5).

The X on the map is the rendezvous point. Mydron and all the remaining giant owls join the PCs there and wait for instructions after Mydron makes his report. Mydron and Jethoris will depend on the PCs to make a battle plan for the coming engagement.

The following area descriptions can be read or paraphrased to the PCs as Mydron's "reconnaissance reports."

A. Lookout Hill.

> "On top of a small hill some 950' south of here, five men are posted where they can see the front of the estate and the path down to the river landing. One man wears good but travel-stained clothes and may be a lord. Two of the others are warriors, and one is a servant who is holding the party's five horses. I do not know who the fifth man is. The five horses are winded."

The people Mydron describes are Noukam and his party.

Zaraith Noukam: AL NE; AC 5; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, D 12, C 10, I 18, W 16, Ch 16; ML 10; XP 35; chain mail of the finest and lightest type (worth three times normal value), *short sword +2*, belt knife, belt dagger.

Noukam is proficient in the weapons he carries and in horsemanship, seamanship, navigation, endurance, boating, appraising, and gem cutting. He can speak and read/write Common, Alzhedo (of Calimshan), Tethyr Common, Thorass (of Amn), Elvish, and Dwarvish. As protection against Vedthor, he has obtained a *cloak of displacement* (carried rolled up over his arm), and a *ring of spell turning*. These have cost him virtually all his remaining liquid assets, but he considers them worth the price. He also wears three other rings, one mounted with a ruby (800 gp value), one with a diamond (750 gp), and one with an emerald (600 gp). In his pouch he carries 47 sp, 26 gp, and 37 pp.

Yuderaim: AL NE; AC 10; MV 12; C3; hp 18; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 6, D 12, C 10, I 10, W 16, Ch 12; ML 11; XP 175; *scimitar +1*, belt knife. Spells: *cure light wounds* (×2), *detect magic, protection from good, hold person, silence 15' radius, warp wood.*

Yuderaim is proficient with the weapons he carries, and in horsemanship, endurance, religion, and read/write Alzhedo. He wears a *ring of mind protection* (which makes him immune to *charm, fear,* and other mind-influencing spells), and a *ring of shocking grasp.* In his pouch, Yuderaim carries five silver coins that have been enchanted with the *continual light* spell, in the (very mistaken) belief that these will defend him against the darkenbeasts. He also has 16 sp, 17 gp, and 5 pp.

While not a particularly dangerous person himself, Yuderaim carries Vedthor's bane, actually a *crystal hypnosis ball,* in a small pouch slung over his left shoulder by a leather strap. He usually keeps his left hand, bearing the *ring of shocking grasp,* inside the pouch, resting on the ball. He has studied the *crystal ball* enough to know how to attack Vedthor through it, using the *ring of shocking grasp.* Such an attack would not kill Vedthor immediately, but Noukam and Yuderaim believe that this threat gives them considerable protection against the wizard. Yuderaim cannot in any way control Vedthor through the *crystal ball.*

The *crystal hypnosis ball* appears to be a normal *crystal ball* as described in the *DMG,* pages 164-165. If a PC wizard or cleric obtains the ball, he will discover that a *read magic* or *detect evil* spell will open a clear channel to Vedthor's mind. Within 1-6 rounds, the PC will have instinctive knowledge of the following facts: Any magical attack involving physical touch (such as *shocking grasp*) or any *charm* spell (such as *command, enthrall, sleep*) can be transmitted to Vedthor directly along the channel from the *crystal ball* as though the wizard or cleric were in physical contact with Vedthor. Such attacks affect Vedthor alone and not anyone near him (Vedthor cannot "touch" the wizard or cleric along the channel in return). However, Vedthor cannot be actively controlled through the ball until a wizard or cleric of equal experience level or higher has spent at least 100 days (minus twice his experience level in days) studying the ball; the wizard or cleric must use care in doing this or run the risk of being enslaved by the ball just as Vedthor has been.

Bodyguards (2): AL N; AC 4; MV 9; F5; hp 41, 38; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; XP 175; chain mail, light shield, long sword, footman's mace, dagger. Both guards have proficiencies with their weapons and with horsemanship and endurance. These long-time bodyguards of Noukam will fight to the death to protect him. In their pouches they each have coins to the value of 150 gp.

Servant: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 10; XP 7; belt knife. He has proficiency in horsemanship and endurance. In his pouch he carries coins to the value of 43 gp.

Horses, light (5): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 2; hp 15 each; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/1-4; SZ L; ML 5; XP 35; MC.

These horses wear expensive equipment that has been specially made to be

as light as possible while maintaining durability, at twice the normal cost. The horses are excellent specimens, specifically chosen for this journey, and were fresh when Noukam started out, but they have been ridden hard and need rest before they can go on.

B-E. Gardeners' Houses. These small houses are built on the same plan as the cabin at Vedthor's base camp. A vegetable garden has been planted behind each house, but the garden plants rise more than 3' high.

Houses C, D, and E contain the bodies of the families who lived there, killed by Vedthor's darkenbeasts last night (two adults and three children in area C, two adults and two children in area D, two adults and four children in area E).

In house B, a family of four (father, mother, and two children) are being held prisoner by five of Vedthor's mercenaries.

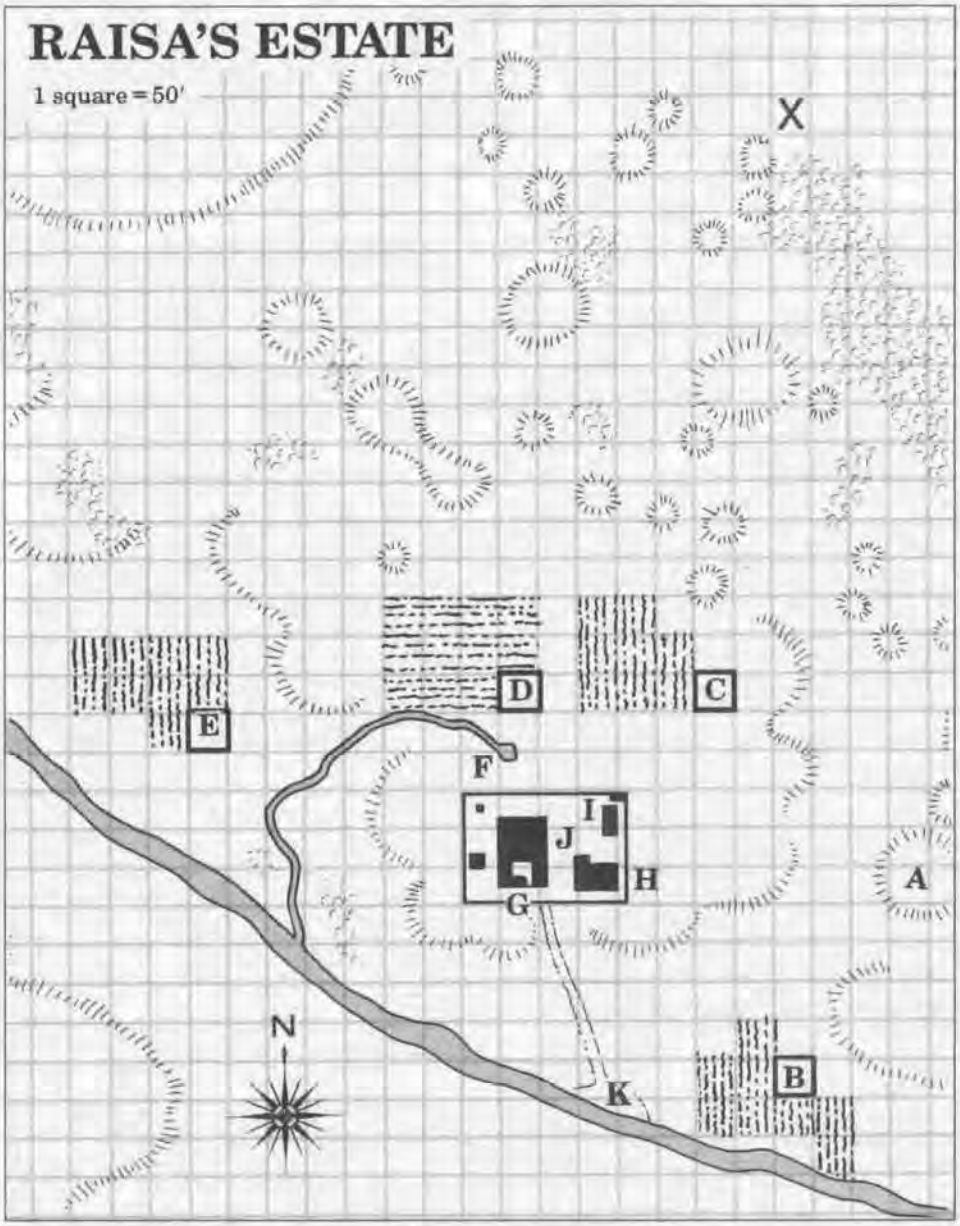
Masrakian, mercenary commander: AL LE; AC 3; MV 9; F7; hp 62; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 13, C 15, I 13, W 12, Ch 10; ML 13; XP 650; chain mail, *medium shield +1 (+4 vs. missiles), bastard sword* +2, footman's mace, belt knife, dagger (in right boot sheath). In his purse he has two gems (200 gp, 100 gp), 8 pp, 12 gp, 15 ep, and 26 sp. Sewn into the waistband of his trousers are a ruby (500 gp), and two diamonds (250 gp, 225 gp).

Masrakian's orders from Vedthor are to keep the gardener and his family alive only so long as they prove valuable in persuading Lanzir that everything is all right on the estate. If anything goes wrong, the family is to be murdered and Masrakian is to take control of the river landing and Lanzir's boat. At the DM's discretion, Mydron has heard Masrakian talk to one of the mercenaries about these orders.

If Masrakian learns of Vedthor's death or capture, he will take Lanzir's boat and attempt to flee downriver.

Mercenaries (2): AC 6; F4; hp 38, 26; THAC0 17; ML 12; XP 175; other statistics as given above; ring mail, shield, short bow, quiver with 15 arrows each, long sword, belt knife, sheath dagger (boot or thigh), 6 gp, 32 ep, 28 sp, three 10-gp gems each

Mercenaries (2): F2; hp 12, 9; THAC0 19; ML 10; XP 65; studded leather armor, shields, long sword, dagger, javelins (two each), 20 sp, 30 cp; other statistics as given above.



Gardener and wife: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 7, 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 10; unarmed.

Gardener's children (2): AL N; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 3, 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 4; unarmed.

F. Spring Pool.

> "At the pool of the spring behind Lady Raisa's compound, two mercenaries are holding Vedthor's horses. There are seven horses on one line and seven on another. These horses are fresh."

Mercenaries (2): F2; hp 12, 11; other statistics and equipment as given above. If Vedthor is killed or disabled, these men will flee. Their horses have the same statistics as the medium horses described in "For the Player Characters."

G. Front Gate.

"Vedthor waits at the front gate of the compound for Lanzir to arrive. With him are twelve sheep; he holds them submissive by his magical staff. They will be his new darkenbeasts come dusk. With him are his bodyguard and a mercenary bowman, both dangerous men."

If Saundel has rejoined Vedthor, Mydron reports that he, too, is at Raisa's front gate.

Even if Saundel has brought word of the fall of the base camp, Vedthor does not change his plans. The wizard expects the PCs to take the loot from the base camp and get away as fast as they can. He can't imagine that the PCs would risk themselves or their prizes by coming to Raisa's estate, and he has calculated his orders to Saundel and the sacrifice of the base camp with that in mind.

If the PCs attack Noukam's position on the hill (area A), Yuderaim has a 50% chance of inadvertently transmitting this knowledge to Vedthor through the *crystal ball* link. This chance increases by 5% with each succeeding round, so that in the 11th round after the attack begins, Vedthor has a 100% chance of knowing about the attack. If Yuderaim dies, Vedthor senses his death immediately. As soon as Vedthor realizes the *crystal ball* is in jeopardy, he drops all other activities and rushes to protect and seize the *crystal ball.*

Berden Akavian: AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; F10; hp 73; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 14, C 15, I 13, W 13, Ch 9; ML 13; XP 2,000; *chain mail +2, two-handed sword +4,* short sword, footman's mace, belt knife, two daggers (in boot sheaths).

Akavian is ambidextrous and has proficiency in his weapons and specialization in two-handed and two-weapon fighting styles. He also carries two vials, each containing one dose of a potion of *extra-healing.* His purse holds a diamond worth 500 gp, four lesser gems worth 100 gp each, 120 sp, 64 gp, and 19 pp. Akavian is Vedthor's personal bodyguard. If Vedthor is killed or disabled, Akavian will attempt to avenge his death.

Tevian Jenour: AL NE; AC 5; MV 9; F6; hp 47; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 14, C 14, I 11, W 7, Ch 12; ML 12; XP 650; chain mail; *composite long bow +2;* quiver with five *flight arrows +1,* four *sheaf arrows +1,* five nonmagical flight arrows, and seven nonmagical sheaf arrows; *throwing axe +1 (bane to elves +2);* throwing axe; belt knife; dagger (in right calf sheath).

Jenour has specialization with the composite long bow. In his purse he carries coins to the value of 300 gp. Strapped to the small of his back is a small packet containing four pearls (150 gp, 125 gp, 100 gp (×2)). He is not one of Vedthor's regular followers and will surrender if it becomes obvious that Vedthor has lost the fight.

H. Stone Barn.

"Many bodies are piled in the stone barn inside Raisa's compound. I think they were Raisa's people, killed last night by the darkenbeasts and brought to the barn by Vedthor's mercenaries so Lanzir won't see them. That should have frightened the horses, but they are very quiet. Vedthor must have calmed them with his magical staff. The horses are tethered and hobbled."

These horses have the same statistics as those described in "For the Player Characters."

I. Kennels.

"In the compound's kennels are Raisa's own dogs, all calm and quiet. Vedthor did that, too. If those dogs were free and had their own will, they would tear his throat out."

Dogs (9): INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 2+2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ M; ML 10; MC. The same statistics are used as for war dogs, but these are big sheep dogs and not combat trained.

J. The Manor House.

"Lady Raisa and a few others, all that remain of her retainers, are being held in the maids' room in the compound's main house. All have been disarmed, and the room has been stripped of anything that might serve as a weapon. The single window is shut and barred. Three of Vedthor's mercenaries guard the door. They'll kill Lady Raisa or use her as a hostage if anything goes wrong."

Vedthor is keeping Raisa alive to blackmail Noukam. If Noukam doesn't give him the *crystal ball* after Lanzir's murder, he will threaten to free Raisa. Since she knows by now that Noukam is behind all the murders, she'll denounce Noukam to the Pasha and Noukam will be destroyed. If Noukam gives Vedthor the *crystal ball,* Raisa and her remaining people will be killed.

Mercenaries (3): AL NE; AC 6; MV 9; F4; hp 38, 31, 26; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; XP 175; studded leather armor (first two mercenaries), ring mail (second mercenary), shield, short bow, quiver with 15 arrows each, long sword, belt knife, sheath dagger (boot or thigh); 11 gp, 32 sp, one 50-gp gem each.

If Vedthor is killed or disabled, these men attempt to use Raisa as a hostage to bargain for their own freedom.

Raisa Enshada: AL NG; AC 9; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, D 15, C 9, I 16, W 15, Ch 18; ML 16.

Enriq Serdor: AL NG; AC 8; MV 12; F4; hp 10 (28 when healed); THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 12, C 12, I 14, W 11, Ch 10; ML 13; leather armor.

Serdor is an ex-soldier who served with Raisa's late husband and now works as her estate manager. He is wounded and has only 10 hp left.

Raisa's bodyguard: AL NG; AC 7; MV 9; F2; hp 6 (18 when healed); THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; studded leather armor. The last survivor of the three men who served Raisa in this capacity, he is wounded and has only 6 hp left.

Male servant: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 10.

Female servants (2): AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 4, 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 10. These are Raisa's personal attendants.

Herdsmen (2): AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 7, 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9. These are the only two survivors of a group of five shepherds who had the misfortune to be at the compound when Vedthor attacked. Both are wounded and have lost 3 hp each.

K. River Landing. If Mydron's report to the PCs is within 30 minutes of dusk (but no earlier), the owl tells the PCs:

"Someone has brought a magically propelled flat-bottomed boat up the small river to the landing below Lady Raisa's estate and is preparing to disembark. It must be Erthoul Lanzir and his family. The people on the boat appear to suspect nothing. As soon as it's dark enough, Vedthor will certainly conjure his darken-beasts to attack them. I could fly down and warn Lord Lanzir, but Vedthor might kill Lady Raisa. You are warriors. What should we do?"

Erthoul Lanzir: AL LE; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, D 10, C 10, I 18, W 15, Ch 17; ML 10; belt knife, pouch with 99 gp and 112 pp. No experience-point value is given for Lanzir, as he is to be saved, not slain, regardless of his alignment.

Lanzir wears six gem-set rings: a sapphire ring worth 1,500 gp, two diamond rings worth 1,500 gp and 900 gp, two ruby rings worth 1,200 gp and 800 gp, and a black opal ring worth 1,000 gp. In his belt he carries a pair of *gloves of dexterity* (as *gauntlets of dexterity*). These are his favorite possessions, since he considers dexterity in handling money to be of prime importance.

Arevan Lanzir: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 13; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 11, C 18, I 14, W 16, Ch 16; ML 13; *belt knife +1*, short sword.

Arevan, Lanzir's elder son, is more honest than his father and prefers a life of activity (soldiering) to one of money lending. So far, however, he has yielded to his father's insistence that he learn to take over the family business and has been able to study fighting with Lanzir's bodyguards only when his father isn't around. He carries 75 gp, 46 pp, and wears a single gold ring (worth 500 gp). Arevan also wears an *amulet vs. undead*, 6th level.

Ynela Lanzir: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 9, D 12, C 10, I 18, W 16, Ch 18; ML 10; sleeve knife.

Lanzir's elder daughter, Ynela, is far more suited to taking over the family business than is her brother Arevan. Unfortunately, Lanzir doesn't even consider her for the role. She carries 156 gp, 57 pp, and wears three gold rings, each set with a different gem (ruby, 1,250 gp; diamond, 1,000 gp; topaz, 800 gp). She also wears a *ring of feather falling*, bought for her by Lanzir because she's afraid of heights.

Lanzir's younger children (2): AL N; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 5, 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 10, 4; unarmed.

Lanzir's younger daughter (hp 3, ML 10) is a little hellion, willing to take on anyone or anything given the chance. Her younger brother will cower in fear under the nearest immovable object should any fighting break out. The children carry no coins but each wears rings and trinkets worth 500 gp.

Myrei: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 10, D 15, C 12, I 10, W 8, Ch 10; ML 14 (8 vs. magic); sleeve knife.

Myrei, the children's nurse, will be as courageous as a mother lioness in defending her charges but is inclined to panic in the face of magic, fantastic monsters, or supernatural enemies. She carries coins worth 187 gp and wears two gold rings (150 gp, 100 gp).

Bodyguards (2): AL N; AC 4; MV 9; F4; hp 38, 36; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; chain mail, shield, scimitar, hand axe, spear, dagger.

These are stout fighting men, unimaginative but loyal to their pay, and really better than Lanzir deserves. They are devoted to Arevan and will follow wherever he leads, regardless of danger. Each man carries coins worth 240 gp.

Servants (5): AL N; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 6; belt knife; 8 sp, 23 cp each.

Lanzir hardly inspires loyalty in his servants, and these men will panic at the first sign of danger.

The family's vacation bags remain on the boat. They are not extensive, since the family stocks everything they need for the summer at their mountain estate. The bags contain only clothes and personal possessions (expensive for the family itself, less so for the retainers).

The bags also contain trivial magical devices typical of Calimshites: toys for the children, a voice-activated abacus for Lanzir, sewing needles that never prick the fingers for Ynela, a book holder that causes a book to turn its own pages for Arevan, etc. (The monetary value of such items is 20 times the value of a comparable nonmagical item in Calimshan, and increasingly more the farther the PCs travel from Calimshan.) Lanzir's bag also contains coins to the value of 1,236 gp. He brought this cash to meet any summer expenses that his personal signature won't cover.

Estate Compound

It is unlikely that the PCs will have any chance to enter the estate compound during the adventure (although Raisa will undoubtedly invite them into the compound to rest *after* the adventure, if they succeed in saving her), but a map of the compound is given for reference purposes.

Watch Tower: The tower has no door. A circular stairway leads from the ground floor to the roof of the tower (40' above) with no intervening floors.

Larder and Storage: The walls are lined with waist-high storage bins, with shelves above them to shoulder height. In the center of the building is a pit with a winch system above it; the pit goes down 60', providing cold storage for goods that are lowered in baskets.

Raisa's Bedchamber: Raisa's bed is in the southwest corner of the room, a dressing table and mirror with chair are against the east wall, and a large wardrobe stands against the north wall. The room is carpeted.

Raisa's Sitting Room: A long padded couch with many pillows sits beneath the windows on the north wall. There is a table with four chairs in the center of the room, and smaller tables in the southwest and southeast corners. This room is also carpeted.

Open Flower Garden: This is Raisa's private garden. Paths leads through the flowers from the garden gate in the north wall to the door to Raisa's sitting room, and to the space between the two pillars where the roofed court begins. This garden is unroofed.

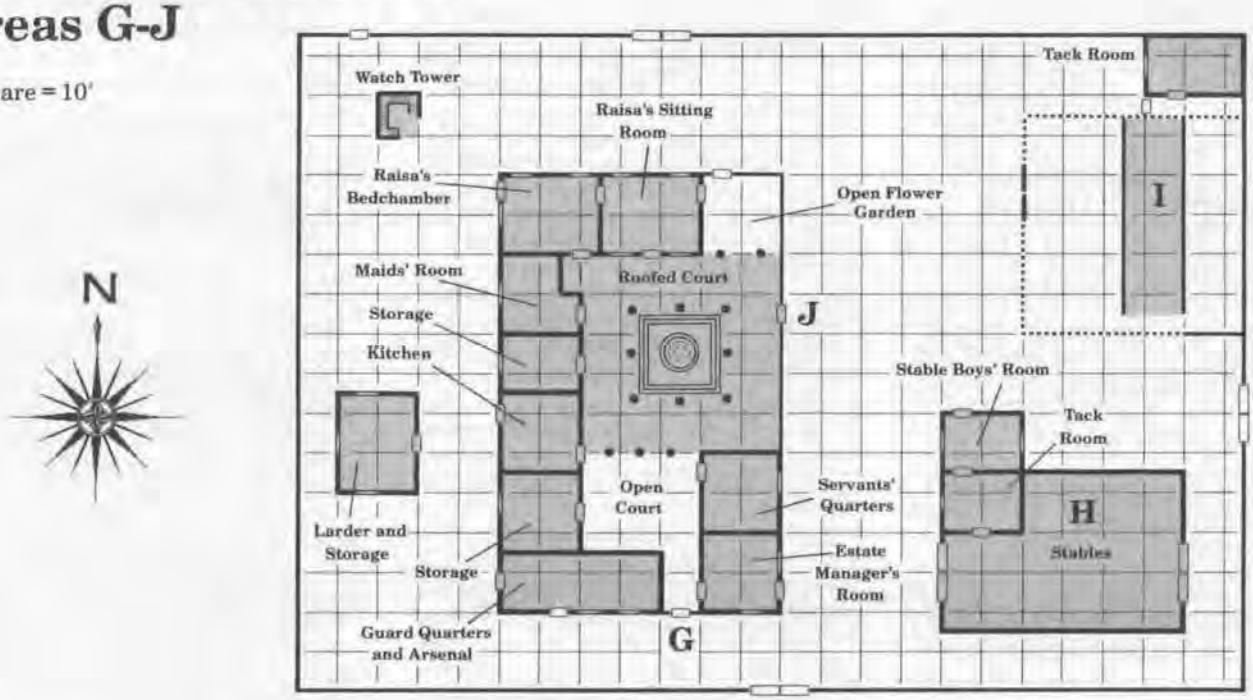
Roofed Court: This high-ceilinged, tiled court is open to the flower garden on the northeast and to the open court to the south. The pool with a fountain in its center is three steps below the level of the court. Eight pillars surround the pool. To the west of the pool, a long wooden table with wooden chairs provides a cool spot where Raisa and her retainers often eat together.

Open Court: There are benches against the west, south, and east walls. The floor is hard-packed earth.

Servants' Quarters: The male servants sleep here. There are six beds, each with a wooden box at its foot.

ESTATE COMPOUND
Areas G-J

1 square = 10'



Estate Manager's Room: This is Enriq Serdor's office and bedroom. There is a bed in the northeast corner, a chest in the northwest corner, and a table with two chairs in the center of the room. A desk with shelves and pigeon holes above it stands in the center of the south wall.

Guard Quarters and Arsenal: Vedthor torched this room with a *fireball.* Everything in it is ruined.

South Storage Room: Waist-high bins line the walls, with shelves above them. Many of the normal items useful for running the household (rope, candles, extra linens, etc.) are stored here.

Kitchen: The fireplace is in the northeast corner, with a long table against the north wall. The south wall supports food-laden shelves to shoulder height.

North Storage Room: This is Raisa's private storage room. Waist-high bins line the walls, with shelves above them. The bin in the northwest corner has a false bottom; in a safe below it (superior quality lock) Raisa keeps her personal treasure (maximum 27,000 gp worth of valuable gems, jewelry, furs, and artwork). Vedthor, being uninterested in Raisa's treasure, hasn't even bothered to look for it.

Maids' Room: Raisa's two maids sleep here. There are beds in the northwest and southwest corners, with wooden boxes at their feet. A table and two chairs are in the northwest corner of the room. The southwest corner holds a dressing table with a mirror and one chair. Raisa and her surviving retainers are being kept here, with Vedthor's guards just outside the door.

Barn and Stables: Stalls for the horses are against the south wall, bales of hay and bags of food against the north wall. The bodies of nine of Raisa's retainers are piled in the center.

Barn Tack Room: The north and east walls are lined with waist-high bins, with shelves and pegboards above them.

Stable Boys' Room: There are cots in the northeast and southeast corners of the room, with storage boxes at their feet. In the center of the room is a table with three chairs.

Kennels: The kennels are closed with a wooden fence, the only opening a latched but unlocked gate on the west. The western third of the kennels is unroofed, the middle and eastern thirds are roofed.

Kennel Tack Room: The walls are lined with waist-high bins, with shelves and pegboards above them.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs refuse to go after Vedthor, the adventure ends. Mydron knows that he, Jethoris, Nishan (if he's still alive), and the giant owls cannot defeat Vedthor. Instead of trying, Mydron flies off to Calimport to tell the Pasha of Calimshan about what's happened. There, he denounces the PCs for their cowardice, and a price is put on their heads by the Pasha. Vedthor murders Raisa, Lanzir, and their people, but Noukam does not profit since the Pasha has him arrested and tried for his crimes. Vedthor becomes a hunted man, though he's better able to handle that problem than the PCs are.

If the PCs decide to risk the odds and try to save Raisa, there are several possible endings.

The DM should remember that the PCs have been hired to destroy the monsters in the estate, not to hunt down Vedthor. All Vedthor wants is the *crystal ball.* The two goals are not mutually exclusive. If the PCs get the ball,

it's possible that Vedthor will offer to trade Raisa for it. A price will be put on his head, of course, but he's used to that.

Even if the PCs are defeated and Raisa and Lanzir are killed, Noukam will not profit from his treachery so long as the DM allows Mydron to survive: Mydron will fly immediately to Calimport to denounce Noukam and Vedthor to the Pasha. A price will be put on their heads. Noukam's family will not take kindly to the revelation of his crimes, and he will find no refuge among them. They will be unlikely to try to avenge his death, since it will have saved them considerable embarrassment.

If Raisa is saved, she rewards the PCs by waiving any claim she might have to the loot they've collected (even though, since they've been working as her retainers from the time Jethoris hired them, they should turn over all of the booty won on her lands). If the PCS have not obtained adequate loot (the DM will have to judge that), she gives them 200 pp each.

There are several sources from which Raisa can learn how Lanzir's greed in forcing Noukam into foreclosure has brought all this trouble about. She might learn the story from Mydron, from prisoners, from Jethoris, or from the PCs. When she does learn about what Lanzir did, she will be furious. There is absolutely nothing Lanzir can do to quench her anger, and she will demand that he make reparations for all the harm that has taken place. Since Lady Raisa is a volatile woman with considerable influence in Calimshan, she will undoubtedly get her way.

The chances are good that Lanzir's influence in Calimshan will be completely destroyed. It's not that the rulers of Manshaka and Calimshan disapprove of his attempt to ruin Noukam. Rather, the disgrace is in his allowing the scheme to backfire. Part of Raisa's reparations will come from Noukam's property, which will all be confiscated before his execution (after a fair trial, of course).

If Raisa is not saved, Jethoris has temporary authority over Raisa's property but is not empowered to reward the PCs in any way. They can keep any loot they've taken but cannot expect anything else. However, neither Jethoris nor Mydron will blame them for failing against such powerful opposition.

Vedthor's seven star sapphires offer the possibility of further adventures. If the wizard escapes with them, the PCs might be employed to hunt him down and recover the jewels. If the PCs obtain the seven sapphires from Vedthor, both Mydron and Raisa insist that the sapphires be returned to the Pasha of Calimshan (the PCs will become hunted men themselves if they try to keep the sapphires). The DM may want to make this journey a separate adventure. Word that the sapphires have been found is bound to leak out, drawing fortune hunters, and the journey to Calimport will be dangerous.

The sapphires are believed to have considerable magical importance, perhaps even the ability to make the Pasha the functional ruler of all parts of the realm. However, since the proper method of activating the sapphires' magic is unknown, the pasha might employ the PCs to find the truth behind the legends. That would be yet another adventure. Ω

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